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ADOLESCENCE AND YOUTH

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Adolescence and Youth

THE PROCESS OF MATURING

Paul H. Landis
State College of Washington

SECOND EDITION

McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.
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ADOLESCENCE AND YOUTH

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Preface to the Second Edition

In the preface of a book it is an author's privilege to make his claims for a new point of view, a new scheme of organization, or whatever else he feels necessary to justify his effort. If the book is fortunate enough to reach a second edition, he need make no further claims, for the book is obviously in sufficiently wide usage to justify its improvement and republication, and he feels assured that a number of his colleagues have already found sufficient reasons of their own for using it.

So he approaches a revision with increased confidence and further tests his point of view against new data and new research, extending and modifying it as the developments of the intervening years may warrant.

I am particularly fortunate in having both engaged in and directed original research in the field of adolescent-youth problems since, as well as before, this book was first published. To the research man the world is never static, answers are never final, and textbooks are never finished. In a dynamic society no one can see the problems of teen-agers today from the perspective of yesterday. This is the first lesson that authors, school administrators, teachers, and all youth leaders must learn.

Biologically, adolescents and youth are much the same as Adam; sociologically, their perspective on life is very different from that of their grandparents, and too often from that of their parents, so that the elders are likely to be something of a problem to their own children. So the pace of life quickens, as the young grow wise in experience and adults fight to save themselves from becoming victims of outworn habit.

I have observed with much interest the increasing tendency of researchers into teen-age problems to obtain their information from adolescents and youth themselves. These results are cited frequently in this revision, for this trend is in harmony with our original thesis that youth problems lie less in the glands than in the social structure in which their personalities are being formed in meeting the concrete daily issues of home, school, peer group, and community.

The basic theory of the book is unchanged, and the general outline remains the same, although the text and data have been revised extensively from Part Two on. The section on the transition to moral maturity has been expanded from four to five chapters; that on attaining marital adulthood from three to five chapters; that on attaining economic adulthood from three to four chapters.

The author is happy to acknowledge the help of Professor William Griffin Gnaedinger, Director of the Audio-Visual Center at the State College of Washington, in having taken the major responsibility in the selection of items for the film list.

Paul H. Landis

Pullman, Washington
August, 1952

Preface to the First Edition

The transition experience that bridges the gap between childhood and adulthood is the subject of never-ending study. The physiological experience of puberty, the psychological experience of attaining maturity, and the sociological experience of adjustment of those in the teen ages is an ever-present challenge to parents and teachers as the generations succeed each other. Still there is not enough understanding of the nature of this critical period in the life cycle of man.

In the study of adolescence there has been too much emphasis on the physiological, too little on the social and psychological; too little understanding that experience is more than a function of physical maturation and inherent disposition; too little understanding of the impingement of the social processes on the developing organism; too much emphasis upon adolescence and youth as a state, a period; too little upon it as a dynamic process which leads the growing organism through a molding series of social experiences.

A great deal is to be gained from an understanding of the social world in which adolescents and youth function, and in seeing how interaction there affects the transition to adulthood. Teacher training must deal more realistically with experience factors in the development of adolescents and youth. Compared with these, understanding the physical organism and inborn behavior mechanisms is of only incidental importance. A comprehension of the functional social situation is a first step to real understanding.

This book recognizes not one social world of adolescence and youth but three: the urban, the town, and the rural. Modern pedagogy has been geared too much to large urban situations in which a minority of adolescents and youth are reared. Each of these social worlds provides for those who reside in them a series of molding social experiences and requires a unique kind of adjustment. Each creates a distinct problem for parent, teacher, and social institution.

Adulthood in a complex society has little relationship to physiological maturity. It is rather defined in terms of moral, marital, and economic competence—social criteria rather than physical. Its attainment is by way of maturing social experiences, an increasing number of which are provided by educational institutions.

If there is merit in this theoretical emphasis, it lies in its greater applicability to the practical task of working with, guiding, and solving problems of adolescents and youth. Too often teachers and parents have used as a scapegoat the traditional emphasis on biological "rebirth," glandular imbalance, and presumed emotional concomitants of puberty. They charge adolescent maladjustment to these factors, about which they can do little or nothing, rather than face issues squarely and recognize that they themselves, or other factors in the experience world of the adolescent, are the seat of his difficulty.

Acknowledgment is made to the following journals for the use of materials that the author had previously published: *School Review; School and Society; Social Forces; Proceedings of the Pacific Sociological Society,* published by *Research Studies of the State College of Washington.*

Acknowledgment is also made to the following individuals for a critical reading of the entire manuscript and for valuable suggestions: Hugh D. Coleman, formerly Superintendent of Schools, Baker, Ore.; Katherine H. Day and Marie Van Maanen, Research Assistants in Rural Sociology; also, to my colleague Dr. Leslie L. Chisholm of the Department of Education for a critical review of the outline.

I am happy also to acknowledge the contribution to my thinking of persons who worked with me on various phases of study and investigation over a period of several years while they were my students or research assistants: James E. White, now Lieutenant in the United States Army; Miss Mollie Holreigh, now librarian stationed at Douglas Army Air Field in Arizona; Charles W. Nelson, now a graduate student at the University of Chicago; Miss Alice Taber, now in executive work with the Camp Fire Girls in San Francisco; and Mrs. Maxine Hildreth, who at the time of the writing of this book was my very efficient secretary.

Paul H. Landis

Pullman, Washington
September, 1945

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

JOANNE ROGERS—ADOLESCENT

Choosing to emphasize the importance of social experience in understanding adolescents and youth, let us begin with a concrete case that demonstrates the working of the social processes in the formation of a personality from childhood to youth. Then there will be time for a theoretical statement.

We introduce, with a fictitious name but otherwise a real person, Joanne Rogers, college sophomore, age seventeen.[1]

> My present community is a college campus, fast-moving, mobile, specialized, and includes about one square mile. It has all kinds of centers and activities within it. For me, it includes only the dormitory, the classroom, the theater, and the library.
>
> A typical day would picture me rising about 6:30 A.M., taking a shower, listening to the Day Major program while dressing and doing my room work, going down to breakfast silently to plan my work for the day, returning to my room to brush up on the politics assignment, then studying all day or going to classes, stopping only for the news broadcast, the newspapers, and lunch at noon, and dinner at night. Occasionally, I help some girl with her English

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[1] This is a student autobiography in the author's collection. At various points throughout the book such accounts are drawn upon to demonstrate the operation of social processes in the development of the personality of adolescents and youth. These papers, more than a thousand in number, were written mostly by freshmen and college sophomores in introductory sociology courses with a social-psychological orientation and in courses in social psychology. Students were asked to describe the development of their personalities in terms of concepts learned in the course as a semester paper assignment. In order to encourage frankness, students were given the assurance that their names, which were to appear only on the upper right-hand corner of the first page, would be clipped off the paper immediately after it had been graded and that no one else would be permitted to read them until after four years when they would have been graduated and there would be no possibility of their identification.

themes. At 10:00 P.M. comes the Richfield news, after which I go immediately to bed. I usually twist and turn worrying about my work until about 12:00, a problem that I cannot overcome. Over the week ends I sleep as long as I can, wash my hair, occasionally go to a movie by myself or with a girl friend. Other times I study or mend or write a letter home about nothing much. I'm quite dull, good-natured, and somewhat easygoing. The girls always know that I never have a date, so I'm the person asked to take telephone and hostess duty in my dormitory and to serve punch at the party. I'm growing less goodhearted; they usually are able to find some other goat.

Then, too, I'm the person who takes good magazines. I'm the person also referred to for subjects for themes and term papers, references, to tell what the Edict of Nantes was about or if that extra bracelet would be too much for this particular costume, how to study for the next test, to get along with a roommate, to keep the girls at the iron from singing. In other words, I seem to be number one Advice Girl.

At parties I'm definitely a flop; therefore, the eats committee is right in my line. Because I'm so busy, I don't have time to get in on the games. I always enjoy myself at older people's parties where no fast games, petting, intricate dancing, roughhouse, or risqué stories are involved. I really go so far as to tease and kid older people and enjoy myself very much. But when I try to have a good time with people my own age, I'm as artificial and dull as I can be; I don't understand them. (Don't ever have an only child, even if you have to adopt some more.) To be admitted into my own group, I'll have to force myself to take up games and sports, learn to dance well, get a few muscles and more wind, lose weight, and clear my complexion—everything that I don't care "two hoots" about now. Perhaps I shall be forced to, but not soon.

I'm quite satisfied with the present mold of my life. I have a burning desire for knowledge, to be good, very good, one of the best. I have a goal—to pass the civil service examination for a position in the foreign service. I'm absolutely confident of securing it, because I *will* be one of the best. That aim dictates the major part of my life. Clothes, amusement, play, society, community, hobbies, appearance, activities, and even friends and family, mean hardly a thing. I sometimes wonder if I'm going after it in the right way. I have but a one-track mind; isolation has always been the only way. I must never lose confidence in myself or a certain amount of conceit, because they are the only whips to drive me on. In sustaining them, I sustain myself. When they begin to ebb, I consider suicide—or running away and changing my name. I'm getting a good education; an opportunity awaits me afterward to go on to an absorbing career—the perfect time, the perfect chance for the perfect thing.

Joanne Rogers, age seventeen, 5 feet 6¾ inches tall, weight 150 pounds, white, female, bright, with a high I.Q., is in the upper 20 per cent of the

2,000 freshmen in her class who took the required psychological examination. These are the simple, obvious measured biological and psychological facts. But clearly a young woman whose whole life centers about one distant and abstract goal, work in the foreign service, a young woman who has no interest in the round of social affairs of a college campus, no wish to compete in the game of mate attraction so prominent among the young women of seventeen, who leans so toward introversion and who drives herself so desperately to study and scholastic excellence that she becomes anxious at times to the point of suicide, must have gone through a series of shaping social experiences that made her scheme of values and her essential personality organization different from that of many other seventeen-year-olds. We therefore must inquire into the social processes that so shaped her personality.

The family group is the most important to personality formation, having much to do with one's goals and ambitions and one's method of seeking them. Joanne describes her family.

> Our family has always been just a marriage and never a joint group including relatives. We have kept hired girls and usually hired men during the work seasons; outside that we have lived alone.
>
> The family includes my father, fifty-eight at present, blond, tall, very good-natured, witty, uncomplaining, well-liked, and quite a successful and modern farmer. My mother is forty, chubby, short, dark, self-centered, quite likable, a rather poor manager, but better than average housekeeper, not too intelligent, extravagant, in general a very average person, whose constant sniffing and lisping was all right when I was used to it, but now since I've been away, those habits irritate me so much I could scream. She is afraid to go to a doctor to see what is wrong with her nose, even though both Dad and I have wanted her to, ever since I can remember. I try to encourage her to practice some speech exercises that I brought from the speech department, but she is too stubborn, lazy, and annoyingly indifferent to try them.
>
> My father is principally of Danish descent, has lived on the same farm since he was three years old. He went only as far as the eighth grade and is typically prejudiced against Jews, grafters, big business, and everything else conflicting with his interests. He speculated on land during and after the war (First World War) and has been paying debts ever since. He is by far one of the hardest workers in the neighborhood as well as one of the largest and most respectable landowners. He belongs to the Grange, a farmer's cooperative, and the Masonic lodge. Dad has modernized his farm machinery and equipment, but not our home, which is owned by his mother. In all, he owns and rents about 2,000

> acres. In spite of all his modern equipment, he plants potatoes by the moon and, I am convinced, will continue that practice.
>
> Other than the financial angle, I don't think my father has had a great deal to do with shaping my life. When I was little, he'd tell me stories, but during the depression, he didn't even seem to know that I was around. The few times that he was in the house, he was eating, sleeping, or reading the newspaper. He has tried to get me to become a farmer, since I am expected to be the sole heir to his property. I was given some stock and sent to the Junior Livestock Show for two years, besides being entered in all the girls' divisions. The one principle that my father has developed in me is saving money. I'm going through college so far on my savings and the income from 54 acres of wheat land I'm renting. Dad farms it without pay and gets the sack bills, too. My father is very considerate of all women, but firmly believes I could do anything that I trained myself for, if I wanted to.
>
> My mother has greatly encouraged me to study and direct my life in whatever field I should choose. Every week for six years, she went to town to take me for a music lesson. She always bribed or rewarded me (I've never been sure which) for doing good schoolwork, picking up my clothes, sitting straight, doing my chores, and being a good girl. It was usually a pretty dress or money. I was forbidden to do anything which would break my glasses or skin my knee again. . . .
>
> I can remember my mother sending me to school with long underwear, two pairs of woolen stockings, lined boots, my Dad's sheepskin coat, leggings, a quilt, and a special brick heater the first three years of school, so I wouldn't by any possible chance catch cold. That alone would have given anyone an inferiority complex, besides a backache. My desire to be good at studies kept me in during most of the recesses; therefore, my opportunities at play and muscle building were seriously handicapped. My mother, without doubt, has done more to influence me than any other person. She has regulated everything I have done and has seen that I did what was expected. She is somewhat mousy and never says much outside the family. She is the sole person with whom I identify myself to any large extent. Sometimes I hate that woman enough to choke her, but most all the time I am very grateful to her. One reason for my attitudes is that it seems there is not much difference in our ages—she has never entirely grown up.

One can readily see the roots of some of Joanne's interests, ambitions, and motivations in this family situation where the predominating values were male values—work and success by the power of self-directed efforts. In the background is the mother motivating the child by material rewards to meet the standards of excellence she held for her.

Next to the family the childhood play group is probably the most deterministic of personality formation. Joanne describes her first play group, which had to be outside the family as there were no brothers and sisters, and its effect on her future status in the rural neighborhood.

> My first play group I shudder to remember. Before I even started to school, when I was only four years old, three little boys just older than I brought us the mail every day and stayed to play. My sexual experiences began then and lasted till I was nine years old when my mother decided it was time for me to learn the facts. I was horrified at what I'd done, but I didn't tell her. All the kids except me seemed to have been informed long before about such matters, and I had a very bad name. Immediately I changed myself completely. I wouldn't even so much as listen to a dirty story. To this day I can count on the fingers of one hand the times I've forced myself to accept a date, but I've never gone twice with the same boy.
>
> The friends I went to school with have never forgotten my soiled record and still remind me of it occasionally, but I weakly try to laugh it off. People always remember the worst things you've done, even though you've completely changed. I don't believe I was ever so happy as the day I heard one boy telling another quite seriously, "I don't care what those fellows got her into, I'm telling you she's the one nice girl there is in this school, and I don't mind telling everybody."

Joanne's lack of interest in making heterosexual adjustments, participating in the game of dating and mate seeking, common to young folk of college age, seems not in the least abnormal when one knows of this early experience in her play group and what it cost her in the way of permanent reputation in the only community she knew until she graduated from high school and left for college.

Beyond the play group are the neighborhood and community, ever projecting their values onto the child, offering him experiences or curbing his expressions. What of Joanne's neighborhood and community?

> The neighborhood is small and "gossipy." Few people have gone further than grade school and most have lived there all their lives. There are few restrictions other than the Ten Commandments. Except for murder and theft, even the Commandments need not be strictly observed. Nice girls are preferred, but the less precise ones are more in demand. One or two families go to church on Easter, but no one thinks of going any other time.
>
> The rural, diversified farming community extends about ten miles from my home. The landscape varies from level flats to rolling hills, from poor timberland to the gigantic lava formation, from meadows to fertile hills. My father

keeps cattle on the scab rock and timberland, cuts wood, and raises wheat on the flatlands. Dairying, stock raising, hunting, fishing, and bootlegging are the main enterprises engaged in by the community. The farming population in our community holds itself somewhat superior to the bootleggers. These feelings of difference are not intense. Most people see the broad side of matters. Expensive machinery and fine houses contrast with a comparatively poor school and the lack of subscriptions to good magazines.

The range of my contacts among people at home was and is very large. I should estimate that I am acquainted with at least 700 people. These contacts are practically all informal and personal.

The community centers are widely distributed, three grain warehouses, the school, and a store and post office at a town of about twenty people, including railroad section hands and everybody living two or three miles out. Most of the marketing and buying is done at a city of over 100,000 population 45 miles distant. Recreational activities are fostered through the school and the Grange. The storekeeper is the postmaster. There is a rural mail route. There is no church; no one wants one.

My home community is quite a contrast to the college life, in which I now live. This community is one of youth hailing from every direction and environment for every possible reason. Instead of the quiet, laissez-faire indifference, everyone is in competition with everyone else, particularly in fraternal, dormitory, and clique groups. Older people include mainly the housemothers who maintain order and try to make us all silk and satin devotees and oh so, so, precise; who inspect our rooms mainly to see what our personal junk consists of. Their biggest problem is to avoid a complete nervous breakdown. I don't wonder! The professors are not known by the bulk of the student population outside the classroom. Whether they are liked or disliked depends on the number of their witty remarks.

In the home neighborhood Joanne has no chance to shed her past. She is known for what she has been as well as for what she is; what she has been affects attitudes of peers and adults toward her as much as what she is. Both past and present roles determine her status in the group.

More significant still is the fact that Joanne's past reputation in this primary-group setting enters into her own conception of her status. Because everybody knows her past, she feels that she is inferior and must always be. Through school she finds a channel for compensation and acquires status by unique achievement. With it comes a higher regard for herself.

Thus far, my whole life has been centered around my education. Ever since I started to school, I've been competing. The branches in which I showed success I improved upon; those in which I failed I dropped to a large extent. The

> home school has an average of sixty students in grade and junior high school and sixteen in high school. The main attraction at the beginning of each year is for the students and the neighborhood to see the new teachers. Afterward, the school is one big family settling down to work and basketball games. Everything is quite informal; students date teachers and vice versa; grades are easily acquired. Life is a party, but nobody learns anything worth learning. I have always had a desire to learn at the expense of everything else. I practically memorized my grade-school books; therefore, I did very well. In high school I was forced to play basketball because there were not enough girls to make a team otherwise. I certainly wasn't very much of an asset, and I never did enjoy myself.
>
> I worked in the 4-H club. We had a wonderful leader who required us to enter at the community fair each year which included other clubs. In addition, we gave demonstrations and were taught judging. This club was highly competitive, and I was inspired to get blue ribbons and, no matter what the competition was, I got them. Then I tried the livestock division and had the same good fortune. This greatly altered my status in the community. I was really someone. But the more I did, the more I was expected to do. Besides 4-H regular work, I had to play at the entertainments and give booster talks for the 4-H. I think the 4-H did me more good than any other organization. What it taught me was much less important than the confidence and conceit that it gave me. I knew I could do anything I wanted to and not be afraid.
>
> In my freshman year of high school I changed music teachers from a housewife to the instructor at a teachers college. I was terribly afraid of this man, but my music progressed by leaps and bounds. My thirteen-year-old eyes had never seen such an immaculate person, never a wrinkle in his clothes that must have been pressed twice a day, never a flaw in speech, well read, and the cleanest person I've ever seen.
>
> Every night I spent hours washing and ironing clothes and trying to get a flat, sculptured effect on my hair. I bathed three times a day to be sure that I was clean, and I was! I've never put so much time in on myself before nor since, but as soon as I get out of college, I'll do it again. It was worth every minute I spent on myself and hard on the soap and the ironing board. I've forgotten much of the music he taught me, but I certainly shall not forget the lessons in personal care which cost only the time to observe them. This man had been to Europe to study, had collected pictures and autographs of today's well-known musicians. I often wonder if his experiences did not have an unconscious effect upon my final choice of a career in the foreign service. Every cent I ever paid that person was worth ten times the money value.

The music teacher was one of those persons who so often influence the adolescent greatly. In this case contacts with him gave Joanne a conception of new roles for herself. Although she does not say so, she undoubtedly had a "crush" on him and had visions of herself as someday being his wife and accompanying him into the big world beyond her community. There she would play new roles among strangers who knew nothing of her guilty past.

These are the broad outlines of the social processes and group experiences that have formed Joanne's personality up to the time she has entered college. She is now a college sophomore, unusually industrious scholastically, determined to reach the goal she has set for life, willing to accept her role as a social misfit and be the maternal adviser to girls in her dormitory, and yet recognizing that in many respects she has not arrived at the desired point in her personality integration. In her analysis of her present problems there is evidence of conflict and confusion, although there is also evidence that she is defining her life program more and more clearly. Let us consider further some of her adjustment difficulties. First, certain of her problems she relates to her own biological development and to the social responses her physical traits have elicited from associates.

> I resemble both my parents in various ways. From my mother came defective eyesight, a tendency toward obesity, dark eyes. From my Dad, height, color of hair, and some facial features. The worst worries I have are my acne skin and dreadful rheumatism appearing at the most unexpected places. About all one can do for both is to grow out of them, if possible. . . .
>
> I've always been much older appearing than the people my age. Because I was grown up when I was ten, everyone always expected a great deal of me. Naturally one has to live up to social expectations at the expense of really getting the worth out of childhood. People use to ask me if I were graduating from high school when I was in the sixth grade. Now they think I'm a graduate student in college. Even my own associates accept me as someone older than they, but the older people accept me as someone younger. I can't see that I fit into any group; so I have to fit myself much of the time. I have been too old for a kid and too young for a woman. I am beginning to fear that the situation will always remain thus.

In addition to the social reactions to her biological make-up, which give her a sense of isolation and aloneness, Joanne feels very sensitive about her inability to participate in the social world.

> I am often ashamed of my inability and ignorance in the social world, but I try to laugh it off by saying that I can't do everything. I'm going to try to direct my summers to achieving more social ease. . . .

> My inferiority in a recreational sense has mainly been overcome by compensating through studying. I am beginning to wonder if this is the right way after all. I could overcome it if I took time. In being successful in the foreign service, the more accomplishments one has, the better chance of success. Next summer I have resolved to learn some sports, dancing, improve my French, learn some shadow and magic tricks, learn to play a horn, and become much better informed on all subjects. I think I need to see the other side of life, but I don't have time at college. . . .
>
> In everything that I do well I have a superiority complex. I don't doubt at all that I carry it to the extreme. Just the other day a fellow said, "That girl is certainly stuck up." I can see that I'm going to need some polishing on myself to give just the right effect, but I'm going to have to change the composition, too. I can't do it overnight, though. . . .
>
> Yet people say, "Joanne, I'd give anything to play and sing like you," or "How in the world do you make your grades?" or "What pretty teeth and eyes you have, Grandmother." For a time I think I'm not such a washout after all. Maybe people really do like me and I'm making mountains. If I would take the time for silly and confidential matters, I could have a great many friends. But if I had a lot of friends, they would bother me so much that I couldn't work. It seems to be an endless chain, and where the weak link is I don't know. May I repeat: I can't do everything. I have neither the capacity nor the ability to manage it. . . .

Joanne's conception of her status is by no means clear. Most of the time she feels quite certain that she is inferior socially. When she considers her goal, she finds a good reason for acquiring new trails that would make it possible for her to enter into new social roles with grace and ease. At other times, when bits of praise or flattery come her way, she feels socially adequate. Maybe she is accepted after all; maybe at least as fully as she wishes to be. So the quandary goes and probably will until she either acquires social ease in peer-group situations or becomes so firmly established in her vocation that continuous ego support will be derived from a successful and unchallenged role there.

In the meantime, the going is sometimes difficult. She resorts to daydreaming. From what we know of her already, it is easy to imagine the content of these dreams.

> I regret that I am very subject to daydreaming. I picture myself in foreign lands learning their customs and having a very difficult but most enjoyable excursion. . . .
>
> The problem that has faced me ever since I graduated from the eighth grade is that of an occupation. I thought and thought and thought and thought—

> nursing, medicine, law, farming, teaching, music? I had always expected to go to college, but even when I came, I took a general course for want of something definite. Then I thought of speech. In music I did very well in my voice lessons under a teacher who spent much extra time to encourage me. Last summer I reached the point where I didn't care what I was. I took a trip off to Montana, went swimming, learned to ride horseback, and quit worrying. Then one day something just said to me, "Why don't you try history? You never stop liking it, and you do very well in it. You have a desire to learn what the world is about. You're broad-minded enough to see that it doesn't consist of just what you know. You're ignorant of everything but what you've contacted. You're not afraid of work. Try the foreign service; see the world and what makes it turn. Improve yourself by associating with the people who are doing these things—the men who have gone somewhere and are guiding the whole world. Have enough ability and you can pass any civil service exam." That's my goal and all the talent, ability, and ambition I can gather won't be one unit too much to take me on from here.

Although fantasy has played a great part in Joanne's thinking, she comes back from the dream world to face the realistic problems her decision implies and drives forward fully conscious of obstacles in the way of making of her dreams a reality.

> My whole life will no doubt be a struggle to achieve equal ability with men in a man's position. The head of my department has frankly told me that I shall have to be twice as good as the average man to even break into the foreign service. I can be and I will; it means that much to me. I know that I myself and all my benefactors will realize that all the added effort is entirely worth while.
>
> I feel that the main reason women are not treated equally in business is because they are inferior, both in experience and knowledge. My goal is to never stop learning. During the winter I open the doors intellectually; from now on, in the summer, I'll open the doors socially as much as possible. I realize that I shall have to do that and can only with great difficulty.
>
> At present, except for relatives, I'm inclined to accept all men on an impersonal basis. I always judge them by their intelligence and ambition rather than by appearance alone. The best looking men are usually low in the other respects. They know they can get by on their looks. I feel that marriage would ruin everything for me; so I discourage friendliness with men as politely as I can. I think the greatest trouble I shall have in a man's world is my being reared in a woman's world. I can see that I'm breaking away from women's standards more and more every day. Perhaps I shall have that adjustment well begun before I have to face it.

Clearly the one thing that holds Joanne together, the motive force, is her desire to achieve her goal of competitive success in passing a civil service examination to enter the foreign service. She is centering all her energies on this goal.

As we review Joanne's present personality, it is clear that the motivations that seemed rather peculiar at the outset for a girl of seventeen are in reality not so when one understands the social processes that have formed her during the years from childhood to adulthood; in fact, it seems quite natural that she would be the kind of person she is. Certainly teachers who worked with her in high school needed to know a great deal more about Joanne Rogers than that she had a high intelligence-test score. Intelligence is not the key to her personality. To understand Joanne, one must know that she has one overpowering ambition compared with which life itself means nothing.

Behind it is no doubt a desire to shed her past, escape into the big, anonymous world of foreign travel, and work with strangers.

A THEORETICAL STATEMENT

We have selected Joanne's case, not because it is necessarily typical of the average adolescent, but because it illustrates so well the basic fact that personality is made and marred by experience, that the child by the time he has reached twelve is already well on the road toward the development of personal ideals, goals, and motivations which will determine his essential reactions to most situations in life, that he is, in fact, not only an *individual* possessed of individual differences but also a *person* possessed of status. In this we imply that Joanne is more than a bundle of individual differences; she is also a person conscious of the position given her in various social groups.

This brings us to a very important distinction which is essential in understanding not only the adolescent and youth but any human being, the distinction between the individual and the person. In thinking of the individual, we are thinking of the human being as he is by mental endowment and mental acquisitions. In thinking of the person, we are thinking of the individual with the added attribute of status, that is, the social recognition that has been given him by the groups of which he is a part. "We come into the world as individuals. We acquire status, and become persons." [2]

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[2] This distinction between the individual and the person is that of Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess. See their *Introduction to the Science of Sociology,* pp. 55–57, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1924.

In working with adolescents and young people, it is important that we understand the adolescent not only as an individual but as a person; not only as possessed of individual differences but also as being conscious of a unique status in every social group of which he is a member. Status is acquired. It is the product of the various roles the individual has played in social groups and of the recognition that has been accorded these roles.

To be first or last makes a difference in the status one holds in any group. Not only does it make a difference in one's status, it makes a difference in one's conception of himself. This brings us to the proposition that motivation is to a considerable extent a product of group expectations that spring from one's social status. One does what he thinks is expected of him in the roles he has acquired through group participation.

If we apply these principles to Joanne Rogers, we see that she has selected from the numerous roles she played in childhood and adolescence the one line of activity which she has found most satisfying from the standpoint of the status it has given her. She seeks recognition primarily in this line. Her various group associations have made her conceive of the intellectual role as being the one in which she can best find the satisfactions she wants. This role she finds compatible, yet not sufficiently so to make her lose sight of her conception of herself as playing unsatisfactory social roles in peer-group social life.

This leads us to another proposition: not only is one's status important, but one's own conception of it. It may well be that Joanne is much more fully accepted socially than she realizes, but because of various unfavorable group reactions, she feels inferior in this sphere of activity and has built up a fear of social situations that robs her of ease. Her role of scholar and excellent performer in the 4-H club has brought favorable recognition. She is sure of her status there and, therefore, has built her whole life about competitive success. She conceives of herself as fitting this role well and therefore derives satisfaction from it.

We must conclude with regard to the origin of the driving force of Joanne's personality that it is derived primarily from having found so many activities unrewarded from the standpoint of group reactions and therefore from the standpoint of personal satisfactions. As a consequence, she pours supreme effort into a rather restricted line of competitive endeavor with the purpose of achieving greatness in this particular line. Here she will be the best. If she fails in acquiring a satisfying status in this, one wonders what the outcome will be. Will she be robbed of all driving force? Will she be able longer to excuse her failings in other fields? Will she, in fact, be able to face life at all or yield to the impulse of suicide?

One might also ask what obligation does the guidance or personnel expert in the school have for Joanne? Obviously, to try to make an extroverted good fellow of her would be foolish. That she should acquire greater social ease by deliberate practice is clear. One who understood and appreciated her central motivation could easily show her that the acquisition of more of the elemental social virtues would be a great asset in achieving the goals she has set for herself. Others more expert in guidance and personnel work will readily see other things that should have been done for her in the high school and that could be done in college. The point to be stressed here, however, is that whatever is done can be done wisely only by one who appreciates the experience factors that have molded Joanne Rogers's personality, determined her status, and influenced her choice of goals. One begins by working within her framework of values and goals and leads from that point forward.

In educational practice we have long appreciated individual differences as a basic and meaningful concept of individual psychology; we have not, however, sufficiently appreciated the importance of social status, a basic and meaningful concept of social psychology. Yet this concept has increasing meaning in a society where much of education is of necessity conducted on a mass-production basis. At no point is a recognition of the person as one possessed of status more necessary than in dealing with adolescents and youth. They are persons who have acquired throughout the trial-and-error struggles of social adjustment of childhood a conception of themselves and their roles. The secondary school and college must in working with them help fit them to new roles through which they can acquire adult status with the kind of satisfactions and recognitions adulthood brings.

The high school through its guidance program and the college through its personnel program have come to recognize the supreme importance of handling each student as a person in a part of his school relationships. Even at best, however, most of the school's work must still be done in group situations. If the school is to do this task well, it must develop a more lively appreciation of the social processes that determine the values, attitudes, and personal goals of the average adolescent and youth. It must recognize more fully the social processes that play upon individual differences and create persons with different roles and varying degrees of social status. It must try to understand the adolescent and youth's own conception of his social status as well.

The modern urban school system sees the adolescent and youth at a given cross section of time, knowing almost nothing of his past. Unless we teachers understand more fully the shaping force of social processes that impinge upon the personality of the modern child to shape him into the twentieth-century adolescent and youth, we fail to understand him in his strivings.

It is the purpose of the treatment in the following chapters to depict as vividly as possible these social processes as they bear upon the experiences of adolescents and young people and create for them the adjustment problems so characteristic of the struggle for adulthood in a complex society.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

The book is so organized as to emphasize what the author conceives to be the major problems that now face young people in America. The following chapter (Chapter 2) defines the adolescent-youth group and shows why it is a problem group. The remaining chapters of Part One present in the following order the foundation materials with which the student of social psychology must work in understanding the adolescent and youth.

1. *The Biological Foundation* (Chapter 3). Pertinent biological factors that relate to behavior are considered—puberty, maturation, sex, and age.

2. *The Social Structure* (Chapter 4). This embraces the unique aspects of the American social climate and culture patterns which provide the mold in which the raw materials of human nature are formed.

3. *Personality* (Chapter 5). Personality is the result of the shaping of an individual's native capacities by the forces operating in his society. The most telling of these forces are not the obvious material forces but rather the more subtle value and attitude systems of the culture which become the value systems and motivations of the individual. We have already defined the person as one with status, status being derived from one's social roles in group situations.

4. *The Personality-forming Process* (Chapter 6). The raw materials of animal nature, so uniquely expressed by heredity in individual differences of temperament, appearance, rate of growth, and other aspects of physical structure, mental capacity, and aptitude, are shaped for every member of our society in the direction of group-conceived values, objectives, and goals. By the time children have reached the age of adolescence, all have absorbed these values, attitudes, and behavior patterns. This fact was illustrated clearly in the case of Joanne Rogers. To illustrate further how different environ-

ments shape the child, the experience worlds of farm, village, and urban youth, and the resulting personalities, are compared.

5. *Personality Stress* (Chapter 7). Strain is the product of adjustment efforts arising from the necessity of every child, regardless of his native capacities, to conform to the requirements of the social order. The adolescent acquires various mechanisms of adjustment in his struggle to play accepted roles in various groups and gain status.

After Part One, in which the basic processes by which the human animal becomes the human personality, the individual, the person, are discussed, Parts Two, Three, and Four take up three broad phases of adjustment in which lie the chief struggles of contemporary adolescents and youths in attaining adult status. These three critical phases of adjustment are:

1. *Attaining Moral Maturity* (Chapters 8 to 12). The child is nonmoral. His morality is imposed by his elders. The adult is moral. Between the nonmoral period of childhood and the period of moral adulthood, the child must acquire the attitudes, behavior patterns, and restraints that are implied in becoming responsible for one's own conduct. In childhood there is the recognition of the authority of parents, and after that, in adolescence and youth, the broader authority of the mores, the law, the social controls of the adult community. The problems of home, school, and church in bringing the child, who lives in a society that has in a certain sense lost its moral objectives, to a moral adulthood is an issue of paramount importance. Three chapters are given to this problem and two to a study of factors that hinder some in attaining moral maturity. The result is moral failure and delinquency.

2. *The Transition to Marital Adulthood* (Chapters 13 to 17). The child must grow out of the parental family, become emancipated from it, and eventually establish a home of his own. This involves the transfer of the more tender emotional attachments from parents and brothers and sisters to a member of the opposite sex. The child must transfer sex interests and sex play from his own self to members of the opposite sex. This implies the acquisition of sex information and attitudes and behavior patterns in the realm of sex. The goal is the establishment of effective heterosexual associations, mate selection, and marriage.

3. *The Struggle for Economic Adulthood* (Chapters 18 to 21). The child is a recipient of economic benefits. He is dependent. The adult must be independent, provide for himself and other dependents. Bridging the wide gap between dependent childhood and economic adulthood in an industrial society, which has forsaken the apprenticeship system, is a serious problem

for modern adolescence and youth. The problems of job choice, of finding a job compatible to one's personality and talents, of migration in quest of work, of establishing new social relationships incident to occupational adjustment, have become major ones. In an industrial society the balance of work and recreation, also, has taken on an aspect of importance not thought of in a work-centered frontier society.

For the modern adolescent and youth the school has become the major agency of social adjustment. The final part of the book, Part Five (Chapters 22 to 25), is devoted to a consideration of the school's part in helping adolescents and youth find themselves and their places in society. The school is considered in its function of:

1. Supervising and directing peer-group adjustments.
2. Trying to make up to the adolescent for the failure of other social institutions, especially of the home and/or neighborhood.
3. Serving as a social elevator for vertical mobility.
4. Vocational education, training, and placement.
5. Guidance toward social, moral, and economic competence.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Summarize the influences that seem to have shaped Joanne Rogers's personality.
2. What value or values did she hold uppermost at age seventeen? Why had these values become the goals of her striving?
3. Were her attitudes toward dating different from those of the average of her peers? Cite factors that were probably responsible.
4. Show how Joanne's past as well as present roles determined her status in the home community at age seventeen. Would the same have held true had she grown up in a large city? Explain.
5. Distinguish between Joanne's roles and her status.
6. Distinguish between her status and her conception of her status.
7. What sort of feelings result when one conceives of his status in meaningful groups as being low?
8. How did Joanne come to conceive of possible new roles for herself beyond the community?
9. Might contacts with fictitious characters as well as real persons give the adolescent a conception of new roles for himself? Explain.
10. Explain how physical factors affected Joanne's adjustments to her social groups. Social factors.

11. Was Joanne Rogers's social inadequacy or adequacy inherent or the product of experience in group situations? Explain.

12. Might daydreaming have entered into Joanne's choice of a vocation? Does her choice appear to be a wise one?

13. Is there any reason for believing that both her daydreaming and vocational choice are related to a desire to escape from her home environment? If you think this is so, why did she wish to escape?

14. If she should succeed in entering the foreign service, will she be free of the necessity for coming to terms with informal social situations, or should she more frankly face the issue of acquiring social ease now?

15. Is there danger in permitting an adolescent to build his life so completely about one goal as Joanne has done? Discuss.

16. Would you say her solution to her own adjustment problems is abnormal when one considers her background experiences? Explain.

17. Distinguish between the individual and the person.

18. Were Joanne's problems primarily of individual differences of hereditary character or problems of social status? Explain.

19. Show the necessity of always dealing with adolescents and youth not simply as individuals but as persons.

20. May teachers and parents have a great deal to do with determining a young person's conception of his status? Explain.

21. What general status is the adolescent-youth trying to leave and trying to attain?

22. In what three broad fields are adolescents and youths striving with great difficulty to attain adult status in American society?

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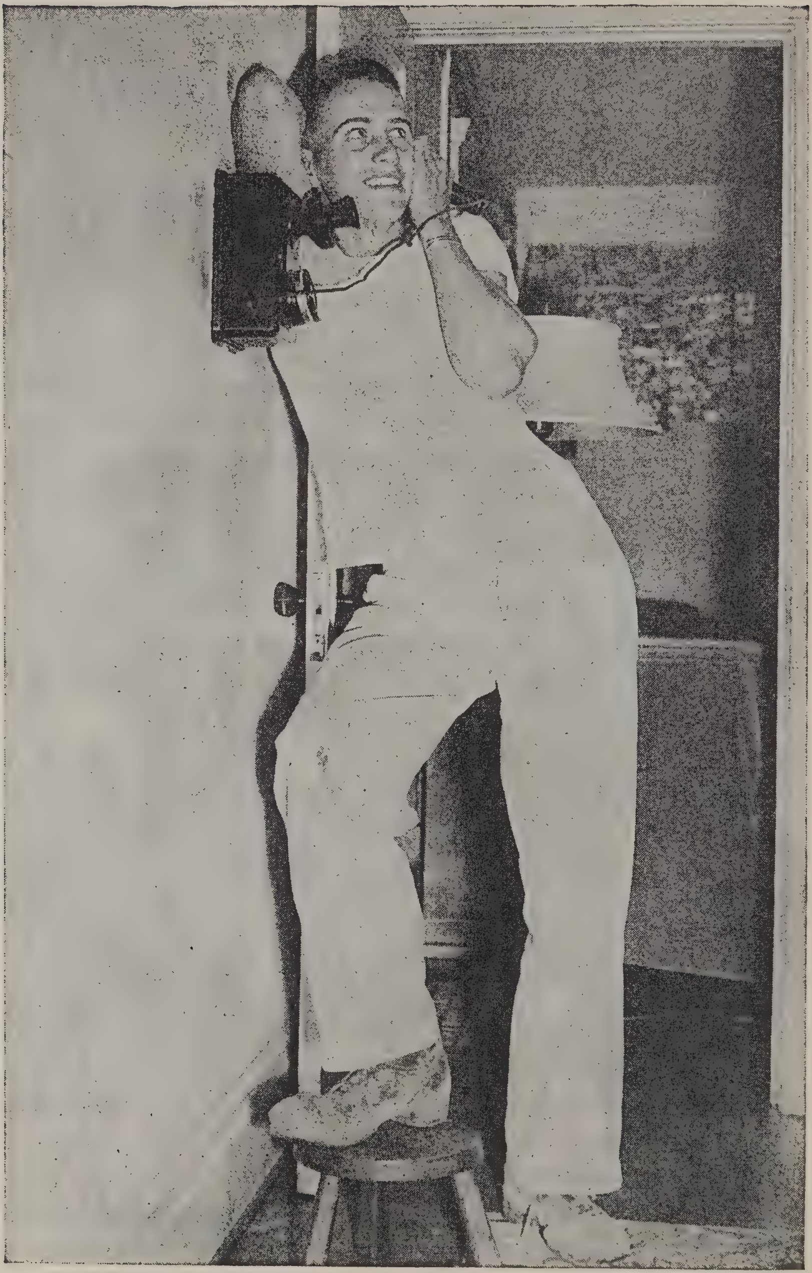
PART ONE

Biology, Social Structure, and Personality

The human being at the onset of puberty is a composite of what heredity provided and experience has developed. There were within him at birth the forces of life and growth, the capacities to receive sensations and to respond, to generate energy, and to act. There awaited him at birth a world prepared by centuries of experience for his coming. Man is a time-binding creature. He carries his past into the present and projects both past and present into the future. At birth, teaching and learning begin—habit and personality formation. The native equipment is thus provided with patterns of behavior suitable to group requirements. By the time he reaches puberty, he is already a human being in the social sense, even though additional social patterns are preserved for him.

At the outset it is important that we understand clearly that we deal from the beginning with a creature whose behavior mechanisms are of habit rather than of instinct, whose behavior potentials are the least shaped but the most promising of those of all creatures; a creature whose great promise lies in the fact that the race presents to him, ready-made, its tools, customs, values, and social equipment. Born without ideas, he can be made to grasp the infinite; born without conscience, he can be made scrupulous beyond regard for his own life; born with the appetites and physical hunger of beasts, he can be transformed to the point where eating is a refined social gesture and passion the theme of literature, drama, and poetry. And these very appetites and hungers of man are expanded into great social institutions.

The making of human nature as embraced in our traditional concept of personality is a lifelong process. There are age periods, however, when the process is more significant than others. In our society adolescence and youth comprise such a period.



CHAPTER 2

Period, Problem, and Approach

THE ADOLESCENT-YOUTH PERIOD DEFINED

Chronologically, the adolescent-youth group is made up of persons twelve to twenty-four years of age; psychologically, of those terminating a prolonged period of infancy; sociologically, of those who are trying to bridge the gap between dependent childhood and self-sufficient adulthood. Childhood, from a social viewpoint, is that period of life when society, usually the family, assumes full responsibility for one's conduct, support, and guidance; adulthood, the period when the individual is responsible for his own conduct, support, and choices.

Viewed from sociological perspective, adolescence and youth comprise that period in life when the individual is in the process of transfer from the dependent, irresponsible age of childhood to the self-reliant, responsible age of adulthood; the uncertain period when parents begin to relax their hold and shift responsibility from their own shoulders to those of their offspring and during which the maturing child seeks new freedom and in finding it becomes accountable to society. The importance of adolescence and youth as a sociological period depends largely upon the conditions of a particular society. Youth may be prolonged or scarcely exist, the child being ushered hastily into adulthood. It may be a period of social crisis—a prolonged siege of agonizing adjustment, which tests the mettle of the initiate—sometimes leaving him broken and defeated; or conversely, it may introduce the individual to no major social decisions and challenge him with few problems of social adjustment.

Adolescence and youth are society-imposed—a lengthened period of social infancy. The adolescent-youth group, in fact, exists only because advanced cultures have created an artificial gap between childhood and adulthood. The group twelve to twenty-four years of age is excluded from full participation in adult life.

From a physiological standpoint, the older adolescent has reached adulthood. He has, in fact, already reached the age at which he could produce offspring, make a living, and assume moral responsibility for choice if expected by society to do so. Persons of similar age do these things in most societies and did them in our frontier society of yesterday. The interesting aspect of the youth problem is that our society does not, except in wartime, find it practical to accept young people into adult social roles.

THE EXTENT OF THE ADOLESCENT-YOUTH GROUP

The place of the adolescent-youth group in the life cycle and its numbers and ratio in the total population are shown in Table 1. It will be seen that the adolescent group, here shown as twelve to fourteen years of age, makes up 4.5 per cent of the total population; the group fifteen to nineteen years, 7.1 per cent; and the older youth group twenty to twenty-four years, 7.5 per cent. Together the adolescent-youth range, twelve to twenty-four years, accounted for 28,880,000 of the 1950 population of 150,697,000, or 19.2 per cent. This group is considerably larger than the childhood group and almost as large as the middle-aged group.

The adolescent-youth period with all the numbers involved is nonetheless a rather brief period in the total life span of contemporary man, as is shown schematically in the chart. With an average expectation of life at birth of approximately sixty-nine years, this period of thirteen years, together with childhood, makes up only a little more than a third of the total life span. The average individual can, therefore, look forward after the youth period to forty years of productive activity before completing the average term of life or, if he is fortunate enough to exceed this term, before retire-

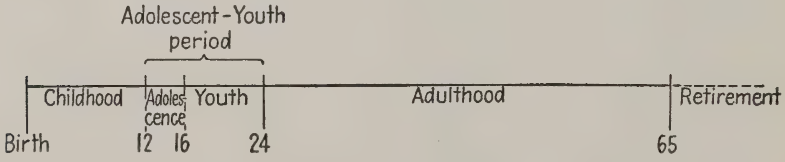


Fig. 1. The Adolescent-youth Period in the Modern Life Span.

The adolescent-youth period, even though it has been extended through a period of thirteen years in contemporary society, still permits the individual to reach adulthood in time to expect forty years of productive activity. In an urban-industrial society the period of youth and the period of retirement are the two most critical phases of the life cycle.

TABLE 1. *The Adolescent-youth Group in the United States by Age and Sex, Showing Their Place in the Life Cycle and Their Percentage of the Total Population,* 1950 *

Age group	Males		Females		Total	
	Number	Percentage of population	Number	Percentage of population	Number	Per centage of population
Children, under 12	17,237,000	23.1	16,869,000	22.2	34,106,000	22.6
Adolescence, 12–14	3,569,000	4.8	3,251,000	4.3	6,820,000	4.5
Adolescence and youth, 15–19 .	5,302,000	7.1	5,431,000	7.1	10,733,000	7.1
Youth, 20–24 . .	5,457,000	7.3	5,870,000	7.7	11,327,000	7.5
Young adults, 25–34	11,659,000	15.6	12,035,000	15.8	23,694,000	15.7
Middle aged, 35–54	19,061,000	25.5	19,454,000	25.6	38,515,000	25.6
Old, 55–64 . . .	6,637,000	8.9	6,543,000	8.6	13,180,000	8.8
Retired, 65 and above	5,711,000	7.7	6,611,000	8.7	12,322,000	8.2
Total	74,633,000	100.0	76,064,000	100.0	150,697,000	100.0

* "General Characteristics of the Population of the United States: April, 1950," *Current Population Reports, Series PC-7, No.* 1, Feb. 25, 1951; and "Children and Youth: 1950," *Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No.* 32, Dec. 4, 1950.

The young adolescent group makes up 4.5 per cent of the total population; the group fifteen to nineteen years, 7.1 per cent of the population; and the older youth group, twenty to twenty-four years, 7.5 per cent. Together the group twelve to twenty-four years accounted for 28,880,000 of the 1950 population of 150,697,000, or 19.2 per cent.

ment. These facts have some very important implications to education in a complex society, as will be pointed out in various parts in succeeding chapters.

It should also be pointed out that the adolescent-youth period is a convenient but nonetheless arbitrary classification. Even yet in our society many young people have no real period of youth. They enter directly into adulthood from adolescence. Some have very little adolescence, being forced into adulthood soon after twelve years of age. Moreover, in a social sense childhood for many extends well past twelve years of age. But in any field of science, arbitrary classifications are necessary in order to establish norms that represent the typical or usual situation under a given kind of social condition.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE ADOLESCENT-YOUTH PROBLEM

A social problem emerges when conditions of society create maladjustments that make the group conscious that certain elements of the population do not fit the social structure.[1]

Agricultural societies historically have had few adolescent-youth problems. Childhood merges directly into adulthood. In our frontier society of a few generations ago, the adolescent group was not recognized as a problem group. Young people took over the responsibilities of adulthood early and were accepted in adult roles by the society. When urbanization developed to the point where the adolescent had no place in the work world, problems consequent to delayed maturity brought to focus the adolescent problem. The youth problem emerged much later; in fact, it was not recognized as such in the United States in any real sense until the depression decade of the thirties.

The scientific study of the adolescent problem has been widespread since approximately 1900, partly owing to the monumental works of G. Stanley Hall,[2] partly because during the twentieth century the secondary-school system has come into its own and the problems of handling a large adolescent group in the new institutional situations provided by the secondary school have offered a never-ending challenge to administrators and teachers. This has led to extensive instruction in the field of adolescent behavior in teacher-training institutions that prepare college youths for the secondary-school system. Adult education in child care and training has also made many anxious parents eager for an authoritative voice of science to guide them in handling their teen-age children.

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[1] For an interesting view on this topic, see Richard C. Fuller and Richard R. Myers, "The Natural History of a Social Problem," *American Sociological Review,* 6:320–328, June, 1941.

[2] *Adolescence,* 2 vols., Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1905; *Youth: Its Education, Regimen and Hygiene,* Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1906.

The upper years of adolescence, now more commonly called the years of youth, ranging from sixteen to twenty-four or from eighteen to twenty-four, were not recognized as problem years to any perceptible extent, as has been pointed out, until the depression of the thirties, when the nation suddenly became aware of the fact that there was in reality a youth problem.

The extent of this youth problem and its meaning were brought to public attention primarily because of the large numbers of young persons in receipt of public assistance in the transient shelters for migrants, on relief rolls for resident dependents, and in various supplemental emergency work and training programs developed by the Federal government, such as the Works Progress Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the National Youth Administration. There was then general public recognition of the growing threat of idleness to that large group of the population just above the high-school group in age. With the growing consciousness that there was a youth problem came a series of studies aimed at understanding their problems. Various suggestions for remedial measures through which society might in some way discharge its obligation to this group of coming citizens who seemed to have reached an impasse, unable to go forward in achieving economic and marital maturity, and threatened because of these frustrations with the dangers of failing to realize moral maturity, were brought forth.[3]

The youth problem was recognized as one of the most critical problems in our society until the Second World War suddenly created universal opportunities for them and solved the major phases of the problem.

A POINT OF VIEW

The entire age range involved between childhood and adulthood is covered in this book since it is believed that one cannot adequately understand the early adolescent period without also tracing the experience of the older adolescent as he enters into the social experiences of young people. Although the secondary school deals primarily with the adolescent, many of the problems encountered are significant only because of the social experiences that are common to young people in an urban industrial culture as they leave the school system.

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[3] Among the most important of these studies are those of the American Youth Commission which was created during this period. Also important were studies of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and WPA. These and other studies of youth are cited repeatedly throughout this book.

Emphasis throughout is placed on understanding the adolescent-youth group in terms of the peculiar social roles they play in a complex society. *Adolescent-youth problems must be analyzed in terms of the social experience of this age group. Simple though this statement may seem, little of the huge volume of literature in the field of adolescent study is based on this assumption.*

Historically, adolescent problems have been largely attributed to physical-psychic-emotional states arising from conditions within the organism—sublime emotions, turbulent temperaments, maladjustments in organic balance, new birth, glandular development, and what not. Such a view of adolescent problems has been outmoded as the sciences of human behavior have advanced.

Studies by anthropologists among primitives have indicated clearly that the causal connections made by genetic psychologists between the physiological traits of puberty and the mental and emotional turmoil of adolescence are not valid. The relationship does not exist where culture patterns make demands on adolescents different from those our culture makes.

Studies of adolescents themselves in our society also show that, if emotional upheaval, emotional control, and similar problems of internal origin are critical problems in contemporary adolescent experience, young people for the most part fail to recognize the fact. For example, of 1,904 high-school pupils in grades nine to twelve of Cleveland High School in St. Louis, Mo., who wrote anonymous essays on their problems, only 11 per cent mentioned lack of emotional control as being a problem for them.[4] In contrast, 46 per cent mentioned problems growing out of their relationships with teachers; 34 per cent mentioned problems growing out of selecting a vocation; 24 per cent mentioned feelings of inferiority growing out of social relationships; 19 per cent, problems growing out of financial conditions of the home; 10 per cent, problems of making friends. In other words, they did not consider that problems arose primarily from their ability to regulate their inner drives but from adjustment incident to relationships in the social environment.

Even personality problems are in large part of external origin, as will be seen from a review of Table 2.

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[4] Charlotte Pope, "Personal Problems of High School Pupils," *School and Society,* 57:443–448, Apr. 17, 1943.

Table 2. *Percentage of* 5,500 *High-school Seniors Who Checked Certain Personality Problems* *

Personality problem	Boys	Girls
Being able to talk to people	27.9	33.3
How to develop self-confidence	21.1	34.4
Daydream too much	20.6	28.3
Having a desirable personality	23.7	25.4
Losing my temper	16.3	26.2
Wanting people to like me	16.8	25.5
Worrying too much	14.7	23.5
Being too nervous	13.1	21.3
Worried about my appearance	15.9	17.8
Being over- or underweight	11.0	21.3
Want to learn to dance	23.7	10.3
Having an inferiority complex	14.9	17.0
Not enough sleep	14.4	12.7
Shyness	13.8	12.9
Poor complexion	10.0	15.4
Controlling my emotions	8.8	14.7
Understanding myself	9.7	13.5
Having the blues a lot	7.9	13.4
Being left out of things	10.3	10.8
Getting along with people	11.5	9.8
Not very attractive	8.0	12.2
Too short, or too tall	7.4	11.1
Having good manners	11.2	8.0
Being uncomfortable at parties	10.6	7.5
Tiring very easily	3.3	10.3
Smoke too much	10.1	2.9
Being awkward	5.1	4.8
Frequent illness	1.7	3.9
Don't have many friends	2.5	3.5
People seem to dislike me	3.0	1.9
Sometimes think of suicide	1.8	2.8
Crippled or other handicap	2.1	1.7
People dislike my race	0.3	0.5

* From L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems*, p. 34, The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., January, 1949.

The Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People,[5] with a nationwide sample, also shows the major concern of high-school youths with external problems. For example, the poll reports high-school young people's concern over what they will do after graduation as follows: how much ability do I have, 59 per cent; for what work I am best suited, 56 per cent; what are my real interests, 42 per cent; what jobs are open to high-school graduates, 40 per cent; how do I go about getting a job, 35 per cent; should I go to college, 33 per cent.

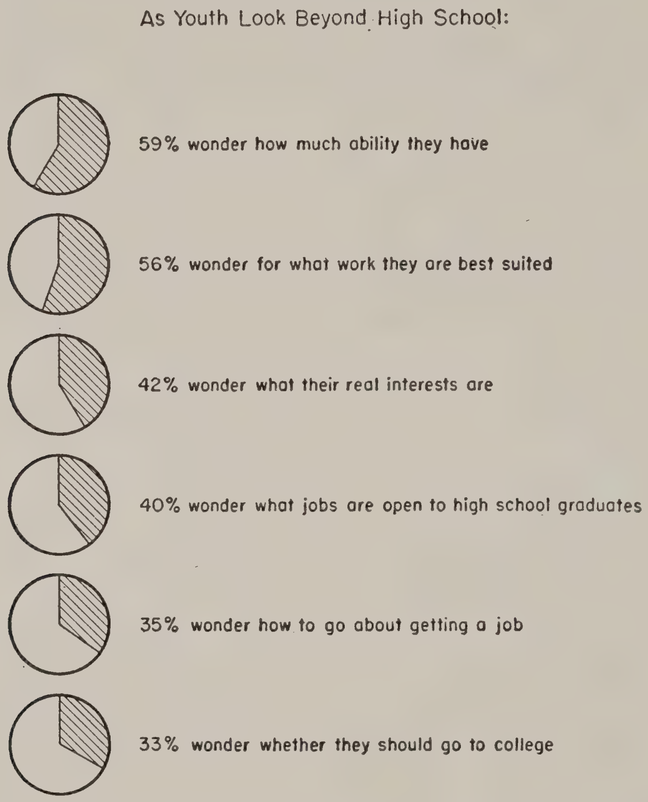

Fig. 2. Some Concerns of Young People As They Look Ahead. (*Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People.*)

It is no wonder that adolescents and youth have such queries, for they have reached the age, by the late high-school years, when an answer to these problems cannot wait. The answers have been put off throughout childhood and in the early years of adolescence. Now the problems must be faced, for new steps must be taken ahead and the future must be met.

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[5] H. H. Remmers and Lyle M. Spencer, reprint from *National Education Association Journal,* March, 1950.

It may be stated as axiomatic that the emotional responses and mental conflicts of youth for the most part reflect experience with social situations. The internal condition is symptomatic of social relationship. Certainly this is clearly revealed in the case of Joanne Rogers described in Chapter 1. Her adjustment problems and mental conflicts reflect her status in social groups of which she is a member rather than any unique personal reactions to the fact of puberty itself.

It follows that adolescent-youth problems can be understood in large part by learning how contemporary culture and social organization handicap young people in making transitions to adulthood. It follows, also, that the psychology of adolescence and youth has little significance except as it is related to these forces which impinge upon the personality of the individual and which explain in large part whatever mental turmoil he may manifest. Anthropological studies, as well as recent studies of contemporary adolescents and young people, suggest that we are safe in working on the hypothesis that mental maladjustments and emotional conflicts are primarily the product of external forces which impinge upon adolescence and youth in a complex society. Culture patterns, rather than innate make-up or sexual maturation, define the social roles of adolescents and youth. For us the problem is to analyze these roles as a product of group- and culture-conditioned behavior.

The complexity of these roles in an urban industrial culture is the essence of our problem. After commenting on the rather exacting procedures employed by many societies to initiate adolescents directly into adulthood, Blos makes the following interesting observation concerning the lack of well-defined roles for adolescence and youth in Western society:[6]

> In Western society there are no such cultural recognitions given to the gradual process of growing up nor to the significance of puberty as a stage of maturation. The adolescent lives in a cultural no-man's-land between a protected, socially irresponsible childhood and an independent adulthood in which he is suddenly to take on the full responsibilities of maturity. The culture is so departmentalized that a special institution outside the family, namely the school, is set apart to prepare children to acquire the powers, mainly the intellectual powers, necessary for eventual adult life. In accordance with cultural tradition, this preparation is to take place within the school, where the child

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[6] Peter Blos, *The Adolescent Personality,* p. 262, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1941.

can be kept safely detached from serious adult affairs. Established traditions in our culture are not favorable to the notion of preparing children for adulthood by permitting them to participate increasingly in adult activities.

Adolescents and youth in a complex society do much striving in reaching adulthood compared to adolescents and youth in more simple societies. The strivings reflect problems imposed on them by the social structure rather than inherent differences in the biological constitution of primitives and moderns. This fact further demonstrates the desirability of a situational rather than a biological approach to problems of contemporary adolescents and youth.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Define adolescence and youth. Point out the difference among a chronological, a psychological, and a sociological definition.
2. Do you think the adolescent-youth period in American society is a product of physiological factors primarily or of social factors? Explain.
3. What is meant by the phrase "a lengthened period of social infancy"?
4. How many young people are there in age group twelve to twenty-four in the United States? What percentage of the total population is in this age period?
5. Discuss the factors that created a problem of adolescence. A problem of youth. Distinguish between adolescence and youth as these terms are now commonly used.
6. Contrast the biological and social-psychological approach to adolescent-youth problems. What is meant by social roles?
7. What is meant by puberty? Are puberty and adolescence synonymous?
8. Is puberty primarily responsible for emotional reactions of adolescence? Defend your position.
9. Indicate the kind of problems with which adolescents and youth are concerned. Show how these problems may lie at the root of mental and emotional conflicts.

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CHAPTER 3

Physical Fact and Social Meaning

HISTORICAL MYTH AND SOCIAL REALITY

Most of the confusion in our thinking about adolescence, as has been implied in Chapter 2, has grown out of exaggerated conceptions and numerous misconceptions regarding the effect of biological forces, originating within the creature, on behavior. This has led to an underestimation of the importance of forces within the individual's social habitat.

This is analogous to the common practice of a generation ago when every common behavior trait was labeled an "instinct." Then it was assumed that one could do little about behavior because it was in the nature of the beast. With greater understanding we have come to see that most common behavior traits reside in the culture pattern and are a part of the individual's behavior mechanisms only because of habit formation. The instincts were for the most part products of a lively scientific imagination.

It was handy enough for the parent to dismiss the bullying tendency of her son by saying it was due to the pugnacious instinct, or the wayward tendencies of her adolescent daughter by saying it was the mating instinct, but so to label it did nothing for its solution. Such problems can be solved if understood as products of experience rather than of biology.

Let us admit frankly at the outset that man is animal underneath; not a first-class animal, for nature has provided him with so little equipment for facing life as an animal. But nonetheless he has some equipment. There is the physical body vested with energy, the forces of life and growth; the nervous system to preside over it; the ductless glands controlling organic drives, feelings, and emotions. The organism has the capacity for learning and for thought.

But being a poor animal opens the way to becoming a human being. The ill-formed patterns of behavior are elaborated by training into many forms of social behavior. Other animals begin where their ancestors began; man begins where his ancestors left off. Improvements of the generations are passed on to the child through social transmission. Teaching in its broadest sense is the essence of personality formation.

But let us try first to understand the importance of certain biological characteristics as they relate to behavior patterns of adolescents and youth. The most obvious of these physiological traits are puberty, maturation, sex, and age.

PUBERTY AND ITS PHYSIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The period of adolescence is unique in that physiological developments associated with sexual maturity take place. These developments, summed up in the general term "puberty," are universal and invariable. The physical changes implied are (1) the development of secondary sex characteristics, such as changes in body proportions, notable widening of the hips of the girl, growth of pubic hair, hair in the armpits, fuzzy hair on the face and body, growth of breasts of the girl, change of voice of the boy; (2) the development of primary sex characteristics, that is, the maturing of the sex glands which in the girl is followed by ovulation and menstruation and in the boy by the production of spermatozoa which is usually accompanied by occasional nocturnal seminal emissions.

THE CEREMONIAL ACCOMPANIMENTS OF PUBERTY

Puberty, like other critical periods in the life cycle, has often called for institutional ceremonies to mark the occasion and give it special social significance.[1] Many primitive societies have developed elaborate ceremonial procedures for welcoming the pubescent into adult society or for making him conscious that he must assume new roles. Our society, on the contrary, has entirely neglected puberty from a ceremonial standpoint. Even the fact of sexual maturity, which makes reproduction possible, has little relationship to courtship and marriage. They are delayed for purely social and economic consideration. Passing through puberty is ignored by our social institutions, no new social status being granted the adolescent by virtue of the fact that he has reached or passed through puberty.

In societies where puberty is recognized ceremonially, the process of initiating the pubescent individual into adulthood takes many different forms.[2] It may involve a long teaching process; it may introduce him to sex experience through established tribal procedures. It may test his capacity to be an adult through ordeals of various characters. These ordeals for the boy often involve excruciating pain or torture which test his mettle to see whether he can suffer like a man. He may be expected to isolate himself, fast, and torture himself until he sees a vision. Before he may bear the stamp of adulthood, other societies require that certain body parts be mutilated.

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[1] Ruth Benedict, "The Science of Custom," *The Century Magazine,* 117:645–649, April, 1929.

Some societies let the child grow up unencumbered by most of the social codes until they are forced upon him at puberty, whereas others have a long training program beginning at birth and continuing until the individual takes over the responsibilities of adulthood. In all societies, whether training is gradual from childhood or introduced as a revolutionary epoch in the child's experience, there is consciousness on the part of adult society that children must eventually take over the roles of adults and must be prepared for those roles. Modern society has delayed the day of assumption of the adult roles far past the age of pubescence. The teaching process is gradual and continuous. It extends for many individuals far beyond puberty, reaching into the years of youth. It is inclined to ignore puberty entirely even to the extent of neglecting teaching the elemental facts about sex maturation and sex functioning.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF PUBERTY

The very disregard of puberty in our society has in the past been a source of emotional shock to many adolescents who developed primary sexual characteristics without any knowledge of their meaning. Menstruation is believed to have been a common source of psychic shock in the past when mothers were inclined to handle their daughters with a hush-hush attitude, failing to prepare them in any way for the peculiar physiological experience. Also, under that system of sex education, or rather lack of it, the entire field of physiology as it centered about sex was labeled "unclean." It was natural that under such conditions fear, anxiety, and emotional shock should result. With proper preparation by the giving of frank information in a nonemotional, matter-of-fact way, there is no reason whatever for emotional shock. In fact, it is doubtful that the modern girl who has been given even the rudiments of sex education suffers any serious emotional disturbance from this source.

[2] Ruth Benedict, "Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning," *Psychiatry,* 1:161, May, 1938.

It has also been assumed that the boy was likely to be alarmed at the first appearance of erotic dreams and resulting nocturnal emissions. These fears, also, reflect the inadequacies of sexual training rather than any natural fear that originates in connection with such a process. If the boy understands that these new sensations and glandular reactions are a natural accompaniment of manhood, there will be no emotional tension resulting. With the boy, as with the girl, a wholesome approach to sex education in the better homes and schools has practically alleviated serious problems of adjustment growing out of these physiological manifestations.

The development of secondary sexual characteristics offers more of a problem. Physical self-consciousness is heightened by the development of secondary sexual characteristics that accompany puberty. With boys and girls the appearance of secondary sexual characteristics may be a matter of some embarrassment in associations in the nude. As the breasts become conspicuous, they may be a source of embarrassment for the girl in play or in appearing before groups. To the extent that these embarrassments exist, they are to be explained by notions of modesty which are characteristic of one's social group. It is doubtful that the average young person today suffers the embarrassments in this field that were characteristic of an older generation when notions of modesty were quite different from those of the present time.

The participation of both boys and girls in athletics in abbreviated dress and the more frank recognition of secondary sexual characteristics as normal and natural have tended to make easier the purely physical aspects of attaining maturity. There are no doubt many cases where boys and girls are teased by older brothers and sisters, by parents, or by members of the peer group and, therefore, become extremely self-conscious and sensitive regarding changes in their own bodies. Boys are probably most likely to experience this difficulty in connection with changes in their voices. This is especially true of boys who have been used to singing or using their voices extensively in group situations. Some boys also are sensitive about the growth of fuzz on their faces, especially if they are teased about it or ridiculed because they secretly use their father's razor. By and large, however, one must consider that most of the social adjustments of adolescents and youth centering about purely physiological developments of puberty are relatively unimportant, except in cases where divergence from the norm is extreme, as with severe cases of acne.

Adjustments that grow out of purely physical developments of puberty are extremely transient, since the adjustment problem usually disappears with the completion of physiological development. With most individuals such embarrassments are at most of a few weeks' or months' duration. The very fact that all adolescents and young people recognize the universality of these physical changes keeps them for the most part from becoming severe causes of social maladjustment.

A more complete discussion of sex education, masturbation, and related problems as they may affect the adjustments of adolescents and young people appears in Chapter 15.

MATURATION AND ITS SOCIAL COUNTERPARTS

The facts of physical and mental growth and maturation are incontestable. They are measurable both by observation and by the more precise scientific instruments. The rate of growth even in these measurable fields is nonetheless a matter of dispute. Much of the literature of adolescence describes a spurt in physical, mental, and emotional growth at the time of puberty. More recent studies question the assumption except in the field of physical growth where a spurt in growth is well established (see Fig. 3).

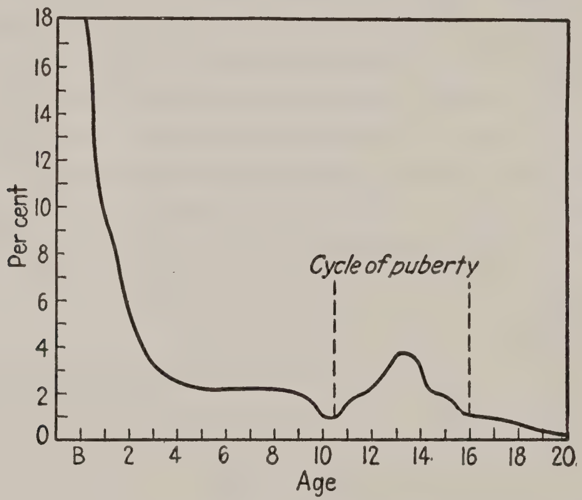

Fig. 3. Schematic Curve of Changes in Velocity of Physical Growth of Boys, Birth to Twenty Years.

The chart is based on per cent increase in growth each six months. The rate of growth during the puberty cycle is seen to be greater than at any other time except in infancy and early childhood. Physical growth is about complete at age twenty. Puberty in girls begins approximately two years earlier than in boys. (*After Dr. H. R. Stolz, Institute of Child Welfare, University of California.*)

Dimock, after making a complex series of measurements and studying behavior traits of 200 urban adolescent boys as they passed through the physiological changes of puberty (at the beginning of the study they were twelve to fourteen years of age and were observed over a period of two years), concluded that[3] "changes that take place in the development of the adolescent are probably not so numerous, so radical, so far-reaching, or so abrupt as was assumed in the earlier phychology of adolescence."

He goes on to show that marked changes took place in physical growth only, but among 25 other items on which facts were obtained, "no abrupt or radical transformations are observed." He concludes that adolescent growth is continuous rather than periodic, gradual rather than cataclysmic.

Hygeia[4] in its Healthgrams says, "There does not appear to be any more reason for regarding adolescence as a period of turmoil physically than for so regarding any other period of growth."

It is usually held that mental growth, as far as an adult is concerned, is complete at approximately fourteen to sixteen years of age. This fact, however, even if true, has comparatively little significance to behavior. There is evidence of increased learning power throughout the entire range of adolescence and youth, and even into maturity. Whether this is due to an increase in ability or simply to a piling up of experience and knowledge and increased effectiveness in mastering learning does not particularly matter to our understanding of the adolescent period. The facts are that the adolescents and youth do manifest a growing capacity to deal with theoretical and practical subjects. The school takes this fact into account in its curricular requirements.

Adolescence is often assumed to mark a flowering of social consciousness. Although the maturing of sex powers does undoubtedly have some relationship to the development of social interest, many of the processes of socialization once thought impossible until a later period are now actually achieved in nursery school. Regard for others, the give and take of social situations, courtesy and consideration—all may be taught at a very early age, providing social expectancy makes these patterns of behavior clear to the child. Even the matter of habitual cleanliness, which under the older psychology was supposed to flower when the youth became interested in attracting the opposite sex, can be as easily or more easily taught at nursery school or earlier so that these practices become habits.

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[3] Hedley S. Dimock, *Rediscovering the Adolescent,* p. 266, Association Press, New York, 1937.

[4] "Healthgrams," *Hygeia,* 16:824, September, 1938.

The turbulent emotional life of adolescents so often described in the early psychological literature assumes an abnormal susceptibility of the maturing organism to emotional shock. Whether this hypothetical explanation is adequate is somewhat questionable. G. Stanley Hall's[5] notion of the adolescent's extreme turbulence of emotion and intellect was derived from the idea that the adolescent and youth recapitulated in their own personal development a revolutionary period in the history of the race. The idea has persisted beyond the time when the recapitulation theory itself has credence.

The severity of adolescent shocks is probably explained in part at least by the fact that adolescents are assuming some of the responsibilities of adulthood. Not having been made immune to shocks by experience, they give undue importance to even minor shocks. They have not had sufficient experience to rate their shocks as adults do. To more seasoned persons they would seem minor indeed.

Certainly it must be admitted that many emotional states which have in the past been attributed to physiological development are due to stimuli from the environment which may themselves affect physiological processes. Remove the environmental stimuli and the emotional situation disappears.

Studies of primitives show that it is possible, in the proper cultural setting, for children to reach maturity without passing through a period marked by emotional strain and crisis.[6]

Adolescence, because it is a period of increasing physiological strength and increasing freedom from adult supervision, admits of a greater range of activities. It is naturally a period of greater experimentation than childhood, and because adults have already narrowed down their activities and associations in line with certain interests and abilities, it is likely to be, also, a somewhat more experimental period than most phases of the adult life cycle. At least this would seem to be the case in the American culture pattern.

If adolescence then is a tumultuous period for the individual, it is no more than is to be expected, since many of his experiments are likely to lead to unanticipated complications in personal or social relationships, to conflicts between group allegiances, and to incompatible relations between personal ideals and experiential realities. Such social experience is often provocative of emotional upheaval.

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[5] *Adolescence,* 2 vols., Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1905.

[6] See Margaret Mead's studies, *Coming of Age in Samoa,* William Morrow & Company, Inc., New York, 1928; and *Growing Up in New Guinea,* William Morrow & Company, Inc., New York, 1930.

It may be that the adolescent as a physical machine often lacks coordination because of the rapid rate of physical growth that he experiences. On the other hand, the fact should not be overlooked that he is at a period in life when many new skills are demanded of him and when he is experimenting with many new situations. His awkwardness is as often due to his learning in these new situations as to a lack of actual physical coordination.

Keliher gives a social explanation for these widely observed phenomena of adolescent awkwardness. She says:[7]

> Many psychologists claim for youngsters at this time an "awkward stage" peculiar to the period of adolescence, but there have been other periods in the child's life when he has increased his ratio of height and volume just as much without going through an "awkward stage." . . .
>
> Explanations? They must be numerous, but prominent as a cause of awkwardness would be the factor of self-consciousness of the body . . . built into our people from the days of their early childhood. We are in America still a Puritan culture. . . . Most of us have inherited with our cultural tradition reticence about body functions, lack of frankness about body needs, and a series of shames about physical development. Self-consciousness and consequent awkwardness are almost inevitable in situations in which tension exists.

Stage of physical growth, like any other characteristic of the person, may have considerable social significance. Changes in energy due to growth may affect certain interests such as interest in athletics.

Growth also has great significance in terms of group norms. Delayed physical development, for example, may be a source of embarrassment to the young person whose peers are already blooming into physical adulthood. The retarded development of secondary sexual characteristics is perhaps more important in the case of boys than of girls, since boys associate freely in the nude and have opportunity to observe this development of each other.[8]

In the same way, acne, the plague of youth, becomes significant in that it may make the young person feel inferior. So also in our culture, where plumpness is rated unfavorably, the chunky girl may feel extremely embarrassed as she compares herself with other girls who are built on more slender, vertical lines. The girl who develops earlier than her peers, becoming a woman in body and interests in junior high school, is often faced with many difficult adjustments.

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[7] Alice V. Keliher in Paul A. Witty and Charles E. Skinner, *Mental Hygiene in Modern Education,* Chap. 10, Rinehart & Company, Inc., New York, 1939.

[8] Herbert R. Stolz, Mary C. Jones, and Edith Chaffey, "The Junior High School Age," *University High School Journal,* Oakland, Calif., p. 68, January, 1937.

It is probable that some of these feelings of inferiority due to unfavorable physical traits are more acute in adolescence than earlier because of association in larger groups and because of a growing desire to be accepted by a larger number of the peer group. The significance of all these traits, however, depends entirely upon the way they are treated by the culture and by the social group in which the youth is participating. In parts of Latin America and in other cultures, a woman's suitors are said to be in proportion to her plumpness. In such a culture the chunky adolescent girl would be in the most favored social position, and the more slender person would more likely suffer from unfavorable social comparison. In all cases, what the group makes of a particular physical characteristic is the thing that counts. Retarded or accelerated physical development, acne, or other distinctive marks become extremely painful to the extent that other members of the group notice them and make the individual conscious of his difference from the accepted group norm.

SEX AND SOCIAL DIFFERENTIATION

The biological fact of sex differentiation, being prenatal, persists throughout life. It affects the rate of maturation and age of arrival at pubescence. Girls arrive a year or two earlier than boys, usually at twelve to fourteen, boys usually at fourteen to sixteen. At the end of the fertile period, about forty-five years of age, the female sex has a well-marked climacteric when the power of reproduction ceases. The loss of fertility in the male is more gradual and comes at a later age. Sex also determines the role that will be played in reproduction.

It is a rather surprising fact that, even though emphasis on biological aspects of adolescent problems has preoccupied teacher-training institutions for a generation, the school still takes no account of the most obvious biological fact of the adolescent-youth period, that high-school and college girls are two years further along toward physiological maturity than boys in the same classes.[9] This forced association of those of similar chronological ages but of different biological maturity hinders dating, courtship, and marriage, a problem which has become one of more than passing significance in our society where sex ratios are badly out of balance after the school period because girls in the marriageable ages congregate in large cities, whereas young men in the marriageable ages are relatively more plentiful in rural areas.[10]

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[9] For an interesting comment on this problem, see James S. Plant, "Social Significance of War Impact on Adolescence," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 236:1–8, November, 1944.

The sociological fact of sex differentiation is a developmental affair that begins in our society in the color of the layette and ends in the later days of youth when the process of building the distinctive phases of the female and male personality have been finished. At maturity differentiation is exhibited, not only in complete attire, but in a different system of etiquette, mannerisms, behavior patterns, social roles, and values. Sex differences of a biological character are universal. Social differentiations are peculiarities of time, place, and social groups.

The adolescent-youth period in our culture has unique significance in that we tend to use the period of attaining physiological maturity as an excuse for loading onto the young person the burdens of sex distinctiveness or, if one likes the difference, the privileges and prerogatives that go with being male or female. In any case, the period of adolescence and youth is for us a period when sex consciousness definitely comes to the front as a force to be reckoned with in one's associations and one's approach to life situations. The home plays its part in developments of this unique consciousness of sex differentiation; the school does, also, in assigning different roles to the adolescent boy and girl.

The development of the masculine and feminine roles of youth around the time of puberty is frequently cited as evidence of a type of natural behavior that is a consequence of physical maturity. That this is actually the cause is questionable. In our culture, social expectation makes very clear that sex differences in behavior are appropriate about this period of life; tomboy activities of girls are frowned upon by the social group, as are sissy behavior patterns of boys disapproved by peers and adults alike. It would seem that these behavior patterns are culturally imposed rather than a necessary accompaniment of pubescence.

Adolescence forces upon the girl new social restraints and new social roles. Pride in these new roles is fostered by the social group. Appropriate dress and appropriate social activities mark the shift to these new social roles. Characteristic of woman's role in our society is maintenance of affectional relationships. The female is supposed to develop traits of compliance, submissiveness, tact, charm, grace, beauty, attractiveness, poise—to become, in fact, a symbol of the finer virtues and ideals of the human race. The male role, on the other hand, is built about vocational success, aggressiveness, dominance, and force. The male is the ruler of the clan and is supposed to develop the traits appropriate to this status and social role.

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[10] For a discussion of this problem, see Paul H. Landis, *Population Problems,* Chap. 14, American Book Company, New York, 1948.

Such sex roles are traditional in origin, not biological. This is strikingly demonstrated by Margaret Mead's study of three primitive societies.[11] Among the Arapesh the women play a feminine role much as in our culture. They are maternal and womanly. In contrast, among the Mundugumor the women are active and virile and assume roles that in many societies are considered masculine. There they lack the "softening and mellowing" characteristics that are considered "instinctively feminine" by many people. Among the Tchambuli the women have a position of dominance in the community and family. They have most to do with determining sexual choice. They are balanced emotionally and highly efficient. The men feel inferior, unwanted, and timid in love-making. They manifest the characteristics of emotional instability which in our culture are considered the unique attributes of women.

Today in American society the traditional roles of the sexes have been challenged as the democratic coeducational school system has tended to minimize sex differences. Nonetheless, the tradition still persists with behavior challenging the tradition.

The struggle for complete sex equality exhibited in the tendency of girls and women to imitate the male role, the quest for a single standard of morality, the tendency toward equality of privilege between boys and girls in the family, employment of women outside the home—these and many other factors in our culture suggest the struggle to do away with distinctive sex roles. The fact remains, however, that "sex appropriateness in the conduct of the child is highly prized by the adults who are guiding him." [12]

The Lynds have pointed out in *Middletown in Transition* the persistence of distinctive sex roles.[13]

> The worlds of the two sexes constitute something akin to separate subcultures. Each involves an elaborate assignment of rules to its members and the development of preferred personality types emphasizing various ones of the

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[11] Margaret Mead, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies,* William Morrow & Company, Inc., New York, 1935.

[12] Caroline B. Zachry, *Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence,* p. 79, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1940.

[13] Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown in Transition,* pp. 176–177, Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., New York, 1937.

> more significant role attributes. These two subcultures, though in general complementary and reciprocal, compete at certain points. Middletown's culture, in common with the Western European culture pattern from which it stems, emphasizes difference in sex on the assumption of contrasting temperamental characteristics and aptitudes of men and women. Men are expected to perform certain social functions and to behave in certain ways, and another set of expectations rules the lives of women. Men get the living, *i.e.,* earn the money to buy the living for the family; they pay for the children's education and the family's leisure, as well as for food, clothing and shelter. They are the representatives of the family in civic affairs, the government surrogates, the paid religious leaders, the doctors, the lawyers. They handle certain practical affairs —repairing the car or buying the tickets to Florida. Women look after affairs within the household; they care for the small children, and rear and teach the children, always with male authority in the background in the form of the father who comes home at night or the male superintendent of schools. They select the family's social life. They represent the family in aesthetic activities and in many unpaid civic activities of a refined or charitable sort.
>
> But this culture says not only that men and women do different things; they *are* different kinds of people. Men are stronger, bolder, less pure, less refined, more logical, more reasonable, more given to seeing things in the large, but at home needing coddling and reassurance, "like little boys." Women are more delicate, stronger in sympathy, understanding, and insight, less mechanically adept, more immersed in petty detail and in personalities, and given to "getting emotional over things."

One cannot begin to appreciate problems of attaining adulthood without taking into account the vast difference in social roles that are assigned boys and girls in our culture. As a result of these roles, boys leave high school with broader and more definite community interests than do girls. The New York Regents' Inquiry report makes the following interesting comment:[14]

> . . . Actually, the boys in every grade and community group studied displayed somewhat wider interests than the girls did. Whether the school or the community has been responsible for the development of keener interests among boys, they apparently leave the secondary school with a greater potential for civic and leisure-time participation. Later analyses of the character of boys' interests support this conclusion, for the activities in which boys evince genuine interest seem to contribute far more directly to satisfying relationships in the community, state, and nation than do those preferred by girls.

[14] Ruth E. Eckert and Thomas O. Marshall, *When Youth Leave School,* p. 125, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1938.

It is possible that the transition to economic adulthood for the boy is somewhat more difficult than for the girl in that what is expected in the adult role of the boy may represent a greater divergence from the childhood role. The boy must learn work habits and become the economic head of a new family. The girl, on the other hand, must continue in a certain sense to be the dependent member of a family as she was in her childhood, providing she adopts the traditional role of marriage and homemaking. Even the girl who plans to venture into the work world for a temporary career almost always has in the background of her thinking and her planning the ultimate adoption of the role of wife and homemaker. The boy is much less likely to have a definite idea as to his place as an adult in the social order. Even though he assumes marriage and fatherhood, this still is only a fraction of the adult role of any male.

A more extensive analysis of the transition of male and female to adulthood in the fields of marital, moral, and economic adjustment will follow in the appropriate chapters. The important point to realize at this stage is that social roles change; most of them have no necessary connection with the biological fact of sex; they reflect tradition. In a society like our own where traditions are being challenged, changing sex roles complicate problems of attaining maturity. Many current problems of the adolescent girl relate to woman's changing social role in our society. We have learned that women can tend the drills and blowtorches quite as well as the pots and kettles, can compete in athletics and smoke tobacco. This knowledge is disconcerting to adolescent and youth of both sexes as they consider problems of morality, marriage, and income.

AGE PERIOD AND SOCIAL ROLES

The adolescent-youth group has been defined in terms of age. From the biological standpoint age is a simple measure of maturity, an index of the duration of the mechanism in time. From the standpoint of organic development age marks roughly the various stages in the maturation of the individual, although physiological development may vary somewhat from the chronological norm. From a sociological standpoint age is significant primarily in that it determines the role that the individual will play in his social group. From an economic standpoint age is significant in that it conditions the individual's role as consumer and/or producer of goods and his place as independent or dependent member of the group.

The role of children, of adolescents and youth, of the middle-aged, and of the old varies greatly in different cultures. In some cases roles relate rather directly to biological characteristics of a population element, but more often they spring from customs that ignore physiological antecedents. Children may be petted and pampered until they are twenty or more years of age, as in our society, or they may be forced to work like slaves at the age of six. Adolescence, as we have seen, may be marked by puberty ceremonies which engross the attention of the entire tribe for a season, or it may be disregarded.

The role of the middle-aged is more likely to be standardized, in a broad sense, than that of any other age group, this period in life being one that is of necessity in all cultures devoted to certain basic interests—the rearing of families and the production of economic goods.

In some societies old age is greatly revered, the best that life offers being reserved for the old by virtue of the high regard in which they are held. Old people may be few in number in societies with high mortality rates but nonetheless they may, if custom so dictates, be the most influential group in the entire population. Such is the case in Chinese society, where honor is accorded in proportion to one's years. In other societies the aged are treated with harsh realism, some societies disposing of them by various means because they are an economic burden which the society does not see fit to carry. In other societies tradition calls for suicide when the old person becomes dependent.

Age, then, like most other biological characteristics, takes on significance largely in terms of what the group, because of established custom, makes of it. Among the Incas of Peru, for example, the age classification relates directly to social roles. The classification follows:[15] (1) Babe in arms; (2) able to stand; (3) a fledgling, under six; (4) from six to eight, a bread receiver; (5) from eight to sixteen, one who needs light work; (6) from sixteen to twenty, a cocoa picker; (7) from twenty to twenty-five, almost a man; (8) from twenty-five to fifty, able-bodied; (9) from fifty to sixty, half old man; (10) from sixty on, an old man asleep.

The adolescent-youth period, as viewed in our culture, is a cross section in the life of a person, a temporary period in his life cycle.[16] From the viewpoint of behavior the adolescent is a product of his childhood experiences; the youth is the man in the making. Personality has continuity. Each age group must be related to that which preceded and that which will follow. In this respect physiological development pretty well takes care of itself, but in no society is social development left entirely to chance. In our society the personality-shaping process begins in childhood and is finished in youth, as far as its deliberate supervision by social institutions is concerned.

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[15] Alfred Marston Tozzer, *Social Origins and Social Continuities,* p. 208, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1925.

[16] For an interesting development of this point, see Kingsley Davis, "Adolescence and the Social Structure," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 236:9–16, November, 1944.

THE EDUCATOR'S PAST AND PRESENT PERSPECTIVE OF THE ADOLESCENT-YOUTH EXPERIENCE

Modern adolescent psychology had its birth in a set of philosophical assumptions which now appear to be unfounded. The popularity of the theory of organic evolution led not only to its application to all fields of science but also to its use as a tool in interpreting behavior that had no direct relationship to organic factors. In the field of psychology it was responsible for the development of the recapitulation theory, which in brief is the view that each individual in his development from the embryonic stage to adulthood passed through the social history of the race, "from Bushman to Babbitt," as one author[17] so cleverly expressed it.

The most elaborate development of this recapitulation theory found its expression in the field of genetic psychology. Its most popular application was to the adolescent period which presumably recapitulated a period of storm and stress in the social development of the race.

Like any other theory that obtains the prestige of a great name, such as that of G. Stanley Hall,[18] who made a notable contribution to the understanding of adolescents in spite of his theoretical postulate rather than because of it, the basic assumptions of the theory tend to persist, blinding us to the real nature of the factors affecting behavior. Unfortunately, most of the literature since G. Stanley Hall has continued to probe the interior of the developing human mechanism for an understanding of behavior problems rather than seeking them in the more obvious and more logical place, that is, in the social situations that surround the adolescent-youth group during their period of development.

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[17] Arthur Wallace Calhoun, "The Child Mind as a Social Product," p. 80 in V. F. Calverton and Samuel P. Schmalhausen, *The New Generation,* Citadel Press, New York, 1930.

[18] *Youth: Its Education, Regimen and Hygiene,* Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1906.

Most studies of adolescent behavior have been biological rather than sociological in orientation. The essential premise is that one should seek an explanation for adolescent problems and adjustments within the human organism, that physical maturation, glandular development, and the inner life of the individual make difficult his external adjustments.[19]

Too many studies have compared the interests and activities of adolescents at various stages in their physiological development, assuming that interests and activities reflect the effect of physiological development rather than of social roles imposed by our culture at various states of development. For example, to relate the beginning of menstruation to social interests, comparing the interests and activities of girls before and after, and to assume that the physical fact of menstruation changes interests and activities would seem to be an erroneous hypothesis. A more logical interpretation would seem to be that, with the physical developments that come at the time of menstruation, girls are pushed into new social roles and new social interests by their elders, by their peer groups, and by the impersonal forces we consider under the generalized terms, customs, traditions, folkways, and mores.

Physiological development has some effect upon these roles but is not primarily responsible for them. The pattern of the community determines the kind of behavior that adolescents consider appropriate.

Science no longer works from analogous parallels between physiological indices and mental and social behavior. Emphasis has shifted from differentiating organic forces to differentiating social forces. There is little necessary connection between social roles and biological fact. The brick and mortar of human nature are in the germ plasm; society is architect and builder.

One need not delve far into history to find juvenile meanness, pranks, and obstreperousness explained by the concept of original sin, temptation of the devil, and the controlling atmosphere of supernatural forces over the individual. Then followed instinct psychology, which incorporated within the individual as many automatic mechanisms as were needed to explain the full range of human behavior—gregariousness, pugnacity, maternal and paternal instincts, and all the rest.

No longer do we look primarily within the organism for an explanation of behavior but without the individual to the social forces that impinge upon the developing organism, motivate, activate, and mold him. We now seek an explanation for human behavior in the company that an individual keeps—in the locality group, the family, the play group, the pair relationship, all kinds of associations with individuals, social groups, and social institutions—in these influences which make, remake, modify, and create personality out of the raw materials of organic nature. Physical traits themselves are significant primarily in terms of group reactions to them.

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[19] This criticism does not apply to many recent works on adolescence and applies to few of the studies of youth, most of which have been sociologically oriented.

Review again the case of Joanne Rogers and see how fully her inferiorities, drives, motivations, her goals, and her conception of her status are products of group reactions to her and her social roles. One understands her personality and her strivings primarily in terms of these facts rather than that she was large of physique, arrived at puberty early, had acne, and was brilliant. Had large girls been preferred in her group and acne been considered beautiful, she would have felt differently about them. She capitalized on the one virtue her group respected—her intellectual brilliance. One wonders what direction her strivings for status would have taken had she lived in an earlier generation when women were not supposed to be "brainy."

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the pedagogical advantage of a view of human nature which holds that man is born with fixed patterns of behavior as compared to the view that patterns must be acquired.
2. What are the physical changes of puberty? Do these changes call for ceremonial observances in our society?
3. Describe two methods of initiating adolescents into the period of adulthood.
4. Show how adolescent adjustments to the physical changes of puberty relate to (*a*) sex education, (*b*) group ideas of modesty.
5. Are such adjustments of great significance today? Defend your position.
6. Discuss the probable cause of psychological problems relating to the physical changes of puberty.
7. Trace physical growth during adolescence and relate it to puberty. Mental growth.
8. Discuss the problem of emotional turmoils of adolescence from the viewpoint of causation.
9. Show how physical growth or other physical traits may affect adjustment problems.
10. Distinguish between sex differentiation as a biological reality and a social development.
11. Describe the process of sex differentiation as affected by social factors.

12. In what ways is the adolescent-youth period a significant one from the standpoint of development of masculine and feminine roles?

13. Cite evidence proving beyond doubt that masculine and feminine roles are in part socially induced.

14. Relate masculine and feminine roles to problems of adjustment of adolescents and youth in our society.

15. Explain how age is indicative of social roles. Are these roles uniform for each age class throughout all societies? Cite proof.

16. Compare a biological with a sociological approach to adolescent-youth problems.

17. Which is likely to be more fruitful from the standpoint of understanding usual behavior problems?

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CHAPTER 4

Forces in the Social Structure Creating the Adolescent-youth Problem

THE ADOLESCENT-YOUTH PROCESS—A REALITY OF INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

To modern medical science, sanitary and hygienic customs, the Western world owes time for the so-called "lengthened infancy" that now extends to almost twenty-five years of age. The decrease in the death rate among infants, children, and youths [1] has made it possible for most of those who are born to reach the threshold of adult life and spend many years in productive activity before being removed from the active scene by death. We can scarcely comprehend the economic and social significance of this factor in modern life. Three hundred years ago in Western society, the average expectancy of life at birth was less than 30 years as compared with 69 years in the United States today (see Fig. 4 on page 52). Then one could hardly have spent the first 25 years in formal training for adulthood. This marked improvement in length of life has paralleled the increased lengthening of infancy.

At the age of ten the average male can look forward to 58 years of life, the girl to 63; at age twenty, the boy to 49 years, the girl to 53.5 (see Table 3). Even at thirty the average male can look forward to 39.5 years of life, the average female to 44.0.

The adolescent-youth period which once was fairly hazardous from the standpoint of disease and death is now, except for the later years of childhood, the safest period in life. The chances of death for white males at fif-

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[1] For data on the death rate, see the annual reports of the Census published in *Mortality Statistics;* or see summaries in W. S. Thompson, *Population Problems,* 3d ed., Chap. 14, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1942; or Paul H. Landis, *Population Problems,* Chap. 11, American Book Company, New York, 1948.

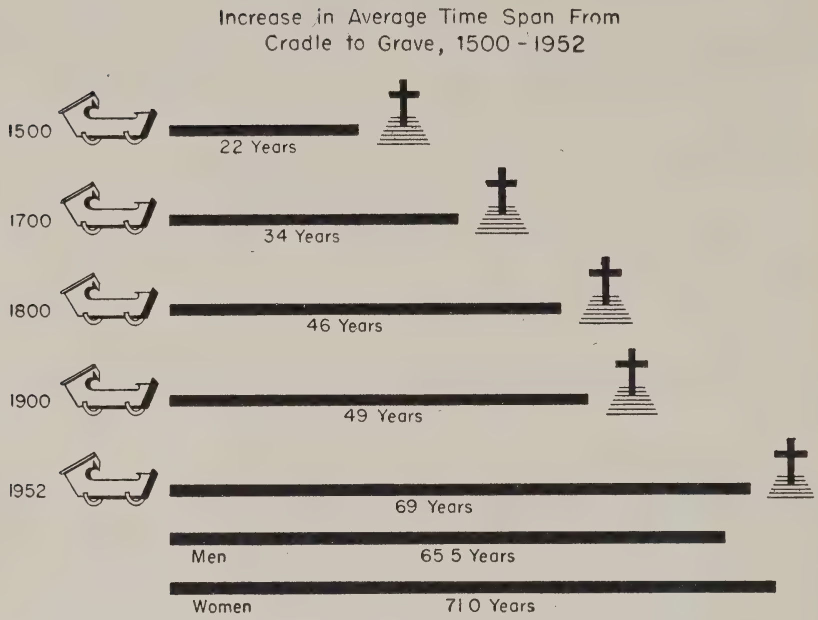

Fig. 4. We Have More Time to Prepare for Adulthood Now.

The average expectation of life at birth has increased from less than twenty-five years in the Western world to sixty-nine years. Consider the economic saving and the greater time that can be spent preparing for life. (*Based on data by Irving Fisher, American Public Health Service,* 1937, *with later data added from census report.*)

Table 3. *Average Years of Life Remaining for White Children and Young People in the United States at Various Ages* *

Present age, years	Male	Female
At birth	65.0	70.5
10	58.0	63.0
20	49.0	53.5
30	39.5	44.0

* *Statistical Bulletin*, Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., October, 1949.

teen years of age are only 1.83 per thousand; for white females only 1.34. At age twenty the rate for white males is 2.69; for white females 2.16.[2]

The obvious social implication of this fact from the standpoint of the school system is that we could spend even as much as thirty years educating the individual and yet look forward to his having sufficient time to make a contribution to society in return for the long period of relative dependency during which he has been trained to perform some specialized function in a complex social order.

The burden of high mortality rates having been lightened, society is better able to afford opportunity for the cultural and intellectual development of adolescents and youth. As comparatively little energy nowadays is spent in reproduction and child care, women can look forward to a great deal of freedom from the home and have time to work or enjoy creative, constructive activity of a nonprofit nature. They, too, as a consequence have opportunity to share the extensive training period.

The psychological confidence, plus the economic saving of a low death rate, are basic factors in creating the adolescent-youth period. The average community has only a third of the funerals of seventy-five years ago, and comparatively few of those funerals are for children and youth.[3] Most of them are for the old who have already produced children and made their economic contributions to society and discharged their obligations to their families.

Approximately 150 years ago, society's burden of caring for those in the younger ages was extremely heavy. Few reached old age. Because many died in childhood, adolescence, and youth, the birth rate had to be high. The stair-step chart compares the difference in the ratio of the child, the parent, and the grandparent generation of 1800, of 1940, and the probable ratio in A.D. 2000, when the length of life will have been increased further. In 1800 the child generation made up 58 per cent of the population, the parent generation 33 per cent, and the grandparent generation (those over fifty) only 9 per cent. In 1940 the child generation was only 34 per cent, the parent generation 46 per cent, and the grandparent generation 20 per cent. By A.D. 2000 the child generation will be only a fourth of the total population and the grandparent generation over a third.

[2] *United States Abridged Life Tables,* 1930–1939 (Preliminary), U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C., 1942.

[3] For a further discussion of this topic and a summary of evidence, see Landis, *op. cit.,* Chap. 12.

Parts of the world which have not shared the great increase in length of life have no youth group in the modern sense. Let us consider briefly, therefore, three typical kinds of societies and their treatment of children, adolescents, and youth.[4]

First is primitive society in which the period of infancy is long, the period of lactation often being five or six years in duration, but the period of childhood is short and the period of adolescence and youth is nonexistent. Childhood merges directly into adulthood, the transition to tribal responsibilities coming early. There is usually little exercise of discipline by parents. The child may be coddled and petted and have every whim catered to by adults.

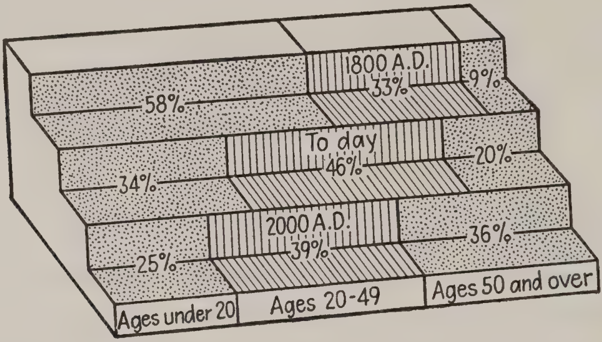

Fig. 5. Proportion of Female Population in the United States in Three Age Groups at Three Periods—Past (1800), Present (1940), and Future (2000).

The left panels show the child generation, the middle the parent generation, the right the grandparent generation. (*Redrawn from Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.*)

Second is that in agrarian cultures where childhood is lengthened because the child constitutes a capital asset to the family. He is desired for his contributions to the labor of the household and the farm. Discipline is designed to mature him quickly into a useful member of the family group. His obligation to the parent may even extend beyond death and be expressed in the form of ancestor worship.

Third is that characteristic of urban industrial organization where the child is an entity in himself. The training period is long and is used in developing the child into a self-sufficient adult. At maturity he is to be an independent individual able to take his place entirely outside the family group. The parent loses all claim. Consequently, during adolescence and youth authority is reduced to a minimum, being maintained only with the view to escorting the child safely to the point where he will have an adult sense of judgment and responsibility and be able to choose his own course. Only in this kind of society is there an adolescent-youth period in the true modern sense.

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[4] This analysis follows essentially that of Elsie Clews Parsons, *The Family, An Ethnographical and Historical Outline,* pp. 90–93, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1906, although there is considerable modification and amplification in certain phases of the statement made here.

The third social system is representative of the urbanized, industrialized Western world, although even in American society survivals of the second system are prominent in rural areas. The farm child is still an economic asset to the family, in spite of compulsory schooling. In many farming areas there is a relationship between age of the children and size of farm operation. As sons reach the age where they are able to help with the work, the father buys, or acquires by rental, a larger acreage of land. As additional sons come to the age where they are useful, additional land is brought into cultivation. Even yet in the states with the highest educational attainments, rural boys much less frequently than urban boys pursue education into its higher levels. In the state of Washington,[5] for example, where 90 per cent of youngsters are in high school and approximately 70 per cent complete the high-school course, twice as many boys in metropolitan communities (places of above 100,000 people) continue their education beyond high school as do boys graduated from schools located in small towns and open country (places of under 250 people). In metropolitan areas almost two-thirds pursue some form of education beyond high school, a large majority of these going to college or to a university. In the rural areas only about one-third continue their schooling beyond high school.

In the deep South among the families of both the poor whites and the Negroes, the family's worth to farmer-employer is determined to a considerable extent by the number of children. This is true, also, to some extent in the Far West among families of migratory workers. In other states where hand labor not requiring a great deal of physical strength is required, such as the picking of fruit and berry crops, children are considered an economic asset even though compulsory school-attendance laws have seriously cut down the length of the workday and work year. Many farm youths have to struggle against the survival of the agrarian pattern as they try to free themselves from the family for high-school or college attendance, or to seek work beyond the boundaries of the family farm, thus making the transition to the free individualism of urban life.

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[5] Paul H. Landis, "Six Months after Commencement," *Youth Series, No.* 1, *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 420, September, 1942; also, "High School Graduates in the First War Year," *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 438, March, 1944; also, "Youth in the Second War Year," *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 454, October, 1944; also, "Washington High School Graduates in Depression and in War Years: A Graphic Summary," *Youth Series, No.* 5, *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 463, May, 1945; and "After High School Commencement in War and Peace," *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Circular* 152, June, 1951.

We conclude, then, that while rural youth share the adolescent-youth process, it is more representative still of urbanized parts of our society. The fact that rural youths cannot in many cases remain rural brings them into the picture as they approach maturity.

The new social forces of an urban industrial society plus the lengthened life span are basic in creating the long period of adolescence and youth. In this sense the adolescent-youth problem is new. The human animal itself has not changed since the days of Moses.

It is important that we consider in greater detail the new social forces that have complicated the process of social adjustment for the adolescent-youth group.

THE CHARACTER OF GROUP EXPERIENCE

The social environment constitutes a major sphere of adjustment and one which is extremely important in the experience of the adolescent-youth group. Social experience may be classified into that which takes place (1) in primary groups and (2) in secondary groups. Primary groups are those in which the individual has intimate face-to-face and fairly permanent relationships,[6] and secondary groups those in which competitive, impersonal relationships predominate. Primary groups have also been defined as those in which one is gossiped about.

In preindustrial preurban societies the transition from the one kind of group to the other rarely has had to be made. In static cultures the child grows to maturity in family and tribe, marrying and eventually taking over the responsibility of adulthood as parents die and as he himself has children. But in an urban industrial society, where large secondary groups characterize relationships for the adolescent and youth after they leave the home setting, adjustment to secondary-group life becomes a nearly universal experience. For some it comes when they first enter the large high-school group. For others it comes when they go to college. For many it comes for the first time when they leave the local setting to find work elsewhere.

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[6] Primary groups were so defined by the late Charles H. Cooley, sociologist and inventor of the concept. See his *Social Organization,* Chap. 3, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1909.

The adjustment called for by the shift from primary to secondary groups is probably most intense for the adolescent and youth from rural areas, open country, and small towns, for these individuals live during the formative years in what is in reality an intimate primary-group situation. As they enter the consolidated town high schools, go to distant cities to find their places in industry, or leave home to enter college, they become immersed in a social situation which is different from any they have previously experienced. That this is a difficult transition must be recognized.

In order to make this discussion more concrete, let us consider typical examples from the experience of the modern adolescent from the farm home and neighborhood. He has gone to school throughout grades with the same classmates. If he is in a one-room rural school, he has always been with a fairly stable play group. His shift into the consolidated town high school places him for the first time in a large peer group, most members of which are strangers. In his childhood group he had an established status growing out of long-standing acquaintanceships. The group was indulgent. The new group is critical. He must achieve a new status for himself. All members of the group are trying to impress each other favorably and to be accepted. Usually the town clique, which has been together in the grades, has the advantage. For many of them, however, the high-school situation is a new and difficult one.

In the following excerpt from a student paper in the author's collection, the boy traces his transfer from the primary group of a small-town high school to a large-city school system. His experience illustrates well the social processes and consequent mental reactions involved in the transfer of an adolescent from primary to secondary group.

> I don't mean to brag but to tell the truth when I say I was probably the most influential or you might say "popular student" in my small-town high school all through my three years there. This, whether due to my personality or not, seems to me to have been the inevitable result of my family's standing in the community. My father and his bank were known and liked for miles around, and my mother was influential in community affairs. As a result of this good and influential standing in the community, I did pretty largely as I pleased in these three years of high school. I never studied and the teachers

> were afraid to fail me for fear of losing their jobs. To me school was just one big good time after another; in other words, I failed utterly to see the serious and practical side of school life. For a boy destined to go on to college, this attitude was a very poor background. In my sophomore year I was toastmaster at our junior-senior banquet regardless of whether I was best suited for this job; likewise I was the pitcher for the high-school baseball team. In addition to many other activities, I was by this time a fair musician and so was the big shot of the high school. But I was soon destined to take a hard tumble from my easily attained perch.
>
> During my senior high-school year I attended a high school with an enrollment of about 1,000 students, and it was here that I found myself just one of a thousand students and a mighty small and unknown one at that. Quite a letdown for the small-town "big shot." The conditions in this school were just opposite from those found in the one from which I transferred. About three-fourths were town students and about one-fourth were country students. Methods of holding class were different here, student government prevailed, and the general procedure was entirely different. It was my problem to adjust myself to this new environment and this, although never fully accomplished in the one year, was well under way after a month had passed. I gradually took up the school spirit that naturally accompanied the football and basketball games and which was a minus quantity at my home-town school. It didn't take me long to catch on to the "wise guy" attitude of the city high-school boy. I took minor parts in operettas while here and played in the four-piece high-school orchestra. I also sang in the glee club. My schoolwork, while being of fair quality, was far from superior. I absolutely did not know the meaning of the word "study," although I did try and learned sufficiently well to graduate.

Those young people who do not go to high school in early adolescence usually try to enter the work world. Here they are likely to be thrown into even more highly impersonal and more competitive social relationships. They must keep pace with adults and carry their share as workmen. This transition, often involving migration from the home and local neighborhood, is likely to be a difficult one, especially for those who have not gone to high school.

For a majority of youth, both urban and rural, in our highly mobile society the break from the primary group is complete and final. The old group associations and all the ties that held them to it are broken by separation. Only memories, sentiments, and the exchange of letters with parents and an occasional visit home hold them to the standards of the childhood group after the original period of homesickness has worn off.

The crux of the adolescent adjustment for many is the striking difference between the primary-group pattern and those of secondary groups in which he begins to participate as he takes the first steps toward emancipation from the family.

The transfer, although it involves difficulties of adjustment for many, also brings new privileges. The young person with special skills or aptitudes may gain a much more favorable reaction in the secondary group than he received in the primary group. The secondary group is more willing to accept him for what he can do, regardless of what his parents' reputation may be. It is for this reason that many young people, as they move out of primary groups into secondary groups, find the less personal atmosphere of secondary groups more compatible.

It will be recalled that Joanne Rogers was unable to shed her childhood reputation, acquired in innocence but never forgotten in her primary group, until she left home and entered the secondary group of a college campus.

Secondary groups introduce the youth for the first time to new liberties. In them there is a greater degree of immunity from criticism. It is easier to escape the consequences of acts that are condemned by the primary group. It is in the secondary group, therefore, that the youth first faces moral responsibility in its true sense. He is able to choose a course of conduct, rather than continue to follow in the groove with the primary group. He is able to do this because he has no established reputation in the secondary group.

It is therefore through secondary-group experiences that the adolescent and youth have an opportunity to take the first steps toward moral maturity. The dangers of this transition depend in considerable part on the extent to which the adolescent has been allowed some freedom of choice within the primary group itself and the suddenness with which he was thrust outside. If the transfer outside the primary group comes gradually, he will gain experience in choice and gradually build up discernment and wisdom. If the transfer from primary to secondary group is sudden, it may be shocking and may too abruptly introduce the young person to freedom which he has no capacity to use intelligently.

The term "sowing wild oats" probably originated in rural societies in which the young person left the restrictive local environment and found himself suddenly thrust into secondary groups where all the old restraints were removed. In this situation it was assumed that the youth would go through a period of "sowing wild oats," that is, suddenly throw aside most of the traditions of the primary group.

The rural teacher who is conscious of this situation, which is the actual experience of most rural adolescents and youths today, has an excellent opportunity to prepare youth of the isolated community for the transition he will eventually make. The teacher in the urban school system who is conscious of the struggle which many rural adolescents experience when they first enter the large town or city school system has an obligation to supervise and direct them in making an intelligent adjustment.

THE CHANGING CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

The cultural environment consists of the man-made world—material objects and ways of doing things. This environment in Western society constitutes a major realm of adjustment for all human beings. In what respects are these adjustments significant, and in what respects is the adolescent-youth group called upon to make them?

In any society there is a large field of adjustments to the informal part of the culture usually referred to as folkways and mores; folkways referring to the habitual practices of the group; mores referring to fundamental life philosophies such as are embodied in the morals and taboos—the "shall" and "shall-not" aspects of the culture—that is, customary practices that are imperative. To this realm of culture in most societies adjustments are made more or less unconsciously and without effort. The person adopts a practice or belief because it is customary, and no one thinks of doing otherwise. The significance of adolescent adjustment to this phase of the culture lies in the fact that, as the individual approaches adulthood, disregard of the essential mores is no longer permitted. Children can be excused because they cannot be expected to know or understand, but as the individual approaches maturity, the mores become rigidly binding. In case of violation, there comes a time when the parents can no longer accept the blame; blame gradually shifts from parents' shoulders to those of the adolescent.

In modern life the crux of the problem of adolescent adjustment to the mores lies in the fact that the mores themselves are not clear-cut or universally approved. Take the matter of sex purity, for example. Literature, cartoons, dirty stories, etc., suggesting the opposite pattern are widely tolerated.

In literate societies many of the mores have become incorporated into law. The authority of these mores is symbolized by the punishment of the law. It is assumed that the child is not capable of delinquency because of the innocency of ignorance. Modern courts are inclined to place responsibility for juvenile delinquency on parent and community. The fact remains, nonetheless, that adolescence marks the gradual transition into that age when it is expected that an individual will experience the retribution of the law in case of failure to obey the prohibitions of the adult community. In his experimental ventures with authority, the adolescent must come to accept the authority of the mores and legal codes of the community if he is to grow into a self-regulated, socially accepted adult. Failure to make these adjustments to the mores and legal codes of the community makes for lifelong frictions with the social group.

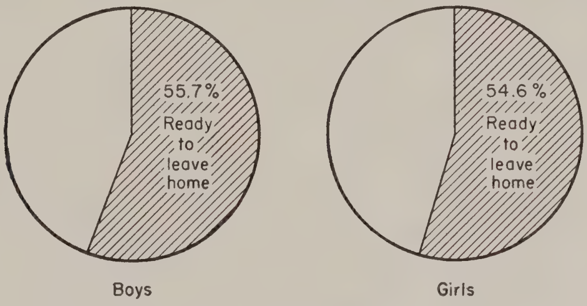

Fig. 6. By the Time of High-school Graduation over Half of Young People Feel They Are Ready to Leave Home.

This attitude is indicative of an age of mobility in which youth have already seen not only far beyond the horizon of home and neighborhood, but beyond the family occupation. One-third thought they would prefer to live somewhere else rather than in their own communities. Data are for 5,500 high-school seniors in the state of Washington. (*Elias, High School Youth Look at Their Problems. For publication data see "Selected References" at the end of this chapter.*)

In addition to the more informal phases of the culture, there are the more formalized phases known as "social institutions." Every society has its basic social institutions, such as the family, religion, education, government, and property systems. The period of adolescence and youth is the stage in life when the individual transfers from the position of an inactive recipient of the benefits of these institutions to the point of being the active, responsible, supporting member of the institution. In adolescence and youth the individual makes the very important transition from being a member of the family to being a family head, from being an inactive recipient of the benefits of the church to being an active adult participant in the activities of the institution. In the school he gradually makes the transition from being a learner at the end of the youth period, to entering adulthood as a contributor to the community functions of a democratic society; in law from being a beneficiary of government, to sharing his part in its system of taxes and services. He becomes a voter and taxpayer. In making his adjustments to the property system, the youth must make the transition from being a dependent in the family of his parents to being economically self-sufficient, making his own way, earning and spending as he chooses.

Yet another major phase of the culture and one with increasing prominence in contemporary society is the material culture which finds its highest expression in the form of technology. In the field of invention and technology, modern life is unique. Never was change more characteristic than in our civilization where the material environment is being constantly remade by man's inventive genius.

Certainly among the major forces affecting the adolescent-youth period, as conceived in contemporary society, have been the machine revolution and the development of technology which has increased the leisure of mankind. Entering immediately into the work world is no longer necessary since the devotion of a much briefer period of the total life span to work is sufficient for the production of economic goods required by all.

Rapidity of change in every aspect of culture, the material and nonmaterial, intensifies problems at all ages but especially for the adolescent and youth who need the firm foundation of cultural certainties on which to build.

SOCIAL MOBILITY

Mobility in American life is twofold: horizontal mobility, that is, mobility from place to place; and vertical mobility, movement up and down the social scale from a lower to higher status. America has made much of both. It was a part of frontier tradition to go West where free land and the unlimited opportunities of the frontier beckoned. No sooner had the frontier disappeared than the American city was bidding for manpower and the great migration urbanward started. Accompanying this horizontal migration, and in part a natural product of it, was the philosophy "hitch your wagon to a star." We talked of social climbing, preached it in the schoolroom, and tried to make every youth feel that he could attain a more enviable status in the world than his parents attained. By this dual process of horizontal and vertical mobility, each generation has inspired the next.

This tradition still survives with great vitality, inspired by the great figures of American history: Lincoln, from log cabin to White House; Ford, from tool-shed laboratory to the management of an industrial empire of world-wide influence; Edison, from modest birth to a world-famed benefactor, wizard of mechanical invention. Our history is full of such examples.

This philosophy has its peculiar significance to the adolescent and youth. Compare this approach to life with that offered by a caste system in which each man is born to his place. In a caste system the child grows up in the tradition of the family, taking over the family occupation, maintaining throughout his lifetime the family occupational status. A youth knows what he is born to and makes the adjustment more or less naturally and unconsciously. But in our kind of society no youth knows what he is born to. He is challenged by the possibility of what he may become by virtue of his own effort.

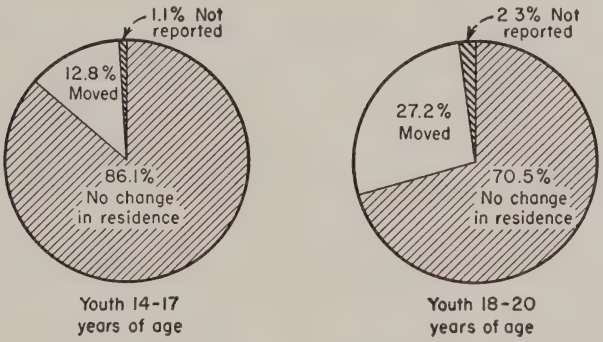

FIG. 7. ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH MOVING BETWEEN THE YEARS 1949 AND 1950.

Migration and opportunity have become almost synonymous in industrial society. (*"Children and Youth: 1950," Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 32, December* 4, 1950.)

Immediately this world of universal opportunity faces the adolescent and youth with the problem of choice. Making decisions is difficult at any period in life. A man who can travel but one road that is clearly marked may go dreamily on his way. He need not puzzle over tomorrow's problem. He need not worry about putting himself in the way of those influences which will carry him to a higher level. But one given a choice must debate whether this way or that. He faces all the troubling questions of what each alternative will bring. A youth in a mobile society knows that some ways lead up and some down, but which is likely to lead one the farthest upward in the light of his own talents, interests, and capacities? It is this kind of decision which is extremely troublesome at a time in life when one has had little practice in making decisions and testing his results by experience. Even the amount of time one should delay for securing an education before entering aggressively into the work world must be decided individually.

Not only is the problem of choice, which enters into the philosophy of youth in a mobile society, difficult but also the problem of readjustment to the changes that mobility brings. Horizontal movements from one section of the country to another call for adjustments to a new kind of natural environment and to local customs. They sever one's ties and require the building of new friendships.

Similarly, vertical mobility calls for numerous readjustments, primarily in the social sphere. Each occupational group in America is characterized by differences in customs, attitudes, and behavior patterns. The youth who leaves an isolated farm setting with its social life may find adjustments on the professional level rather difficult for a time until he becomes accustomed to the habits, thinking, recreational patterns, etc., of his professional associates.

Many readjustments of American life in the field of emotional and mental struggle are occasioned by this frequent shift from one vocational level to another. And this much is sure: whatever the readjustments required by a mobile society, young people bear the brunt of them. It is in the adolescent-youth period that horizontal mobility most frequently comes; it is in this period, also, that the first difficult steps in social climbing are begun.

And these shifts of position today affect both boys and girls. For girls, marriage itself often involves a radical shift in social status. In fact, most girls hope to marry above the social level of their parents, and a surprising number do marry above themselves in education and wealth, thus taking the first big step up the ladder. And they, too, migrate to find jobs and to find their Prince Charmings.

URBANIZATION OF POPULATION

> The relative decline in the importance of rural life and the urbanization of that which lingers on certainly constitutes one of the major turning points in the cultural and institutional history of mankind. The reduction of rural life and institutions to a subordinate position in Western civilization has veritably introduced a new epoch in human history.[7]

[7] Harry Elmer Barnes, *Society in Transition,* pp. 559–560, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1939.

Urbanization is significant not only because it increases the density of population but because it changes the entire tone of the social aggregate. People behave quite differently when thrown together in large aggregates with little geographical space between them and when isolated in families or in small neighborhood groups. The problem of child rearing, of economic adjustment, of morals, religion, marriage, and family, all factors bearing on growing up, become new with this major modification in the life pattern of a people.

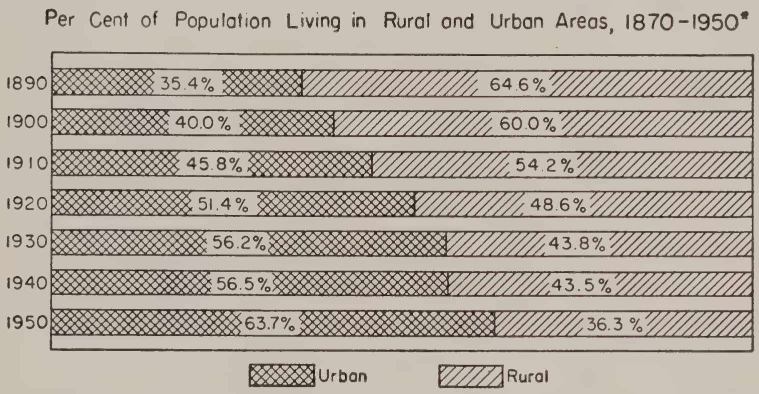

FIG. 8. WE ARE BECOMING A NATION OF URBAN DWELLERS.

Rural places are those having a population under 2,500; urban, those having a population of 2,500 or more. A slight change in the definition of "urban" to include unincorporated places of 2,500 or more and the densely settled fringe around cities of 50,000 or more explains in part the rapid increase in urban dwellers between 1940 and 1950. Had the U.S. Census Bureau used the previous definition of "rural" and "urban," the percentages would have been: urban 59, rural 41. (*Data from U.S. Census.*)

The rapidity with which the United States has made the transition from an essentially rural to an essentially urban civilization during a period of fifty years is shown in the accompanying bar chart. In 1890 little more than a third of the population was living in cities; in 1950, almost two-thirds. Even this does not give the full scope of the change, for the chart cited above divides rural and urban at 2,500 population. The growth of great metropolitan centers has accompanied urbanization. In 1950 cities of 100,000 or more contained 29.3 per cent of the population. If one were to add the additional population in the dense fringe around these cities, these proportions in metropolitan areas would be even greater.

The distribution of adolescents and youths by urban and rural territory is shown in the pie chart. It will be seen that more than half of the group fourteen to seventeen years of age lives in urban areas; almost two-thirds of those eighteen to twenty. This increase, of course, reflects the migration of many rural young people in their later teens to urban centers.

Urbanization has created a new adolescent-youth problem not only for the city-born but also for the rural-born. In the close contacts of urban life with the life of town and open country, rural youths, too, look cityward and are involved in the adjustments consequent to attaining maturity in an urban society.

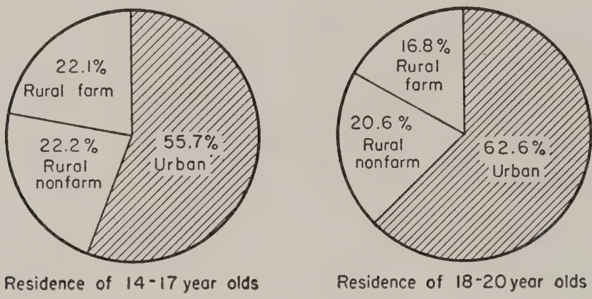

Fig. 9. Place of Residence of Adolescents and Youth by Age, 1950.

Movement cityward explains the greater proportions of eighteen- to twenty-year-olds in cities. Observe the low proportion of those in the late teens on the farm.

In anonymous situations, which one can readily find in the large city, it is easy to escape the rigid control devices of primary-group society and to behave as one likes. Much of the experience of modern youth, because of the freedom of the automobile or of the city street with its ready transportation devices, is in relatively anonymous situations where it is easy to escape the sway of adult group opinion and to do very much as they please. Moreover, much of the loneliness and extreme social isolation of modern life is experienced in metropolitan environments, where humanity is most dense. To be among people but without a name (which is the literal meaning of anonymity) is the worst of isolation. In rural environments everyone is known by name.

THE NECESSITY FOR PERSONAL CHOICE

In a society where a variety of social experiences, heterogeneity in group standards, and change in both the material and nonmaterial culture force upon every individual the necessity of choosing between alternatives, no one way of life is clearly marked. Choice often involves the individual in situations that create anxiety.

Margaret Mead,[8] working from the background of her study of Samoan culture, makes certain observations regarding the problems of adolescence in our culture. She feels that we must train our children to choose, teach them how to think, not what to think, and must present them with choices so that they will learn to weigh alternatives. The kinds of choices adolescents and youth face here which are not imposed upon them in many cultures are: (1) the choice of a vocation; (2) choices growing out of the gap between education of the parents and child; (3) choices growing out of migration of farm youth to city; (4) choices of shifts to new occupations—the Negroes' migration to the North, for example; (5) choices involved in movies, stories, etc., which present short cuts to fame such as do not exist in the experience of young people as they struggle to climb upward; (6) moral choices growing out of heterogeneous standards of a complex culture.

She concludes that we pay for these choices by crime and delinquency, conflict and neuroses, and in the lack of a coherent tradition. At the same time we, by very virtue of this extensive freedom of choice, offer to each person many possible ways of life, the opportunity for the development of individuality, and personal expression to a high degree.

Consider the problem of choice of the American girl brought about by the new role of women. Throughout several decades women have attained increasing freedom from the traditional role of domesticity and have made their way into business and industry. The significance of this new choice in complicating youthful adjustments can scarcely be ignored. We recognize it in relation to the problem of vocational choice which the girl experiences, but it has done more than create a difficult choice between work *or* marriage, or work *and* marriage. It has entirely changed the nature of contact between the sexes. Once these relationships were under the watchful eye of elders of the family and neighborhood; now boys and girls are thrown together at an early age with comparatively little supervision. This is a factor in creating new problems that center about dating, courtship, sex, and morality. Relationships between the adolescent and his peer group of the opposite sex tend to be defined by the adolescent group itself rather than by the elders.

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[8] Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa,* Chap. 14, William Morrow & Company, Inc., New York, 1928.

After describing in considerable detail the difference in manner of treatment of the puberty period by various primitives, Margaret Mead[9] contrasts the problem of adolescent girls in a complex society with that of girls in primitive cultures.

She stresses the fact that the Manus girl and the Samoan girl grow up in a coherent society, whereas the American girl does not. These primitive girls' world is one of unified standards; that of the American girl one of "conflicting standards, contrasting philosophies, angry propaganda." She cannot learn within the sheltered walls of her own home how to play her future part in society. Her home can provide only a fraction of the standards and patterns of her complex society. Her home may even fail woefully to prepare her for life.

In primitive society it matters not how fantastic the cultural solutions, the young accept them because no alternatives are presented. But in our society choices centering about religious doubt, vocation, and type of love face the girl from the time she begins to think. "She can choose not only whom she will love, but whether she will love in or out of wedlock, one or many." In marriage she may choose whether or not she will have children. In whatever choice she makes, she sets the pattern for her weaker comrades who follow her example. Such problems of decision are thrust upon "ill-educated and inexperienced children" in American society where life is so complex and difficult for the adolescent.

THE ADOLESCENT-YOUTH PROBLEM RESTATED

No stage in life is free from problems of adjustment, yet in the experience of all peoples, adjustment problems are more critical at certain stages in life's cycle than at others. At least two variables are responsible for the appearance of crises in the life cycle of the individual: (1) the biological-physical ones and (2) the sociocultural. To the extent the biological-physical changes are of significant importance in adolescence, this period, like the climacteric, the degenerative processes of age, and other critical periods in the life cycle, is worthy of study.

But much more important in modern society are the sociocultural variables. The adolescent-youth period is a critical one in the life cycle of the individual in a complex society, where new social forces have emerged to create a distinct adolescent-youth period, because of the ill-defined social roles assigned to this age group.

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[9] Margaret Mead, "Adolescence in Primitive and Modern Society," in V. F. Calverton and Samuel D. Schmalhausen, *The New Generation,* pp. 183–184, Citadel Press, New York, 1930.

Many would contend that the adolescent-youth period is the most critical one in the life cycle for the individual in our culture. As an individual crisis, it is probably not more important than, for example, widowhood of husband or wife, which usually comes in old age when readjustments are difficult; the period of the empty nest when parents must lose their children to the larger world outside; the period of menopause, when women in our romance-oriented culture fear the loss of romantic appeal; or the period of forced retirement from the work world by the aged man, when he must adjust himself to idleness, forced leisure, and loneliness.

From the standpoint of social obligation, however, the adolescent-youth period makes a much greater challenge to a progressive society than any of these other crises of the life cycle. Society must pay more heed to adolescent-youth adjustment problems, because to ignore problems of this age group is to risk the new generation. Those who fail to make a normal transition to adulthood become the misfits, delinquents, criminals, neurotics, reprobates, revolutionaries. Failure to face the needs of the adolescent-youth group is a failure to discharge an obligation to the future; the neglect of the aged in an urban industrial society is a failure to discharge an obligation to the past. The obligation to the future is considered much more important in Western society, although the other emphasis has been common in many historic societies and is common yet in much of Oriental society.

From the standpoint of our society's having developed adequate institutions to meet the challenge to the adolescent-youth period as compared to some of these other crisis periods, one might have some difficulty in evaluating the situation. Many of the Northern states, which attract up to as high as 90 per cent of their eighth-grade graduates into the high school, provide through the school system and its related activities sufficient institutional experience for the early adolescent period. States more retarded in education have failed to meet the needs of the majority of this age group. No part of the nation has as yet in any realistic sense provided for the critical adjustments of the youth group except as exigencies of war and boom periods of employment provide temporary outlets. It would appear that, although we have provided in more prosperous states more adequately for the early adolescent period than for the crises of old age, we have done much less toward providing for the crises of youth than for crises of old age.

We can do no better in summarizing this chapter than to paraphrase a pointed statement by Calhoun,[10] which properly stresses the critical influence of the broader social forces of modern culture on problems of social adjustment. He suggests that, although "the protagonists of heredity insist that the child should be allowed to select his great-grandparents," it would be more practical to demand the privilege of "recasting the history of the world since the Industrial Revolution, if not since the murder of Abel." If every child could do that, he might have a better chance at a wholesome life.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Trace the change that has taken place in the length of life and show how it has affected the length of the period of transition to adulthood.
2. Describe three types of societies and show how they affect the adolescent-youth experience.
3. Discuss the social experience of transferring from primary to secondary groups. Cite typical examples. What group is most affected by this transfer?
4. Cite advantages to the youth of leaving the primary group. Dangers.
5. Show how problems of conforming to the mores are of importance in the period of adolescence.
6. What new relationships are established with social institutions during adolescence and youth?
7. How has change in the material culture affected the adjustments of adolescence and youth?
8. Distinguish between horizontal and vertical mobility. Show how both kinds of mobility apply to adolescence and youth. How does mobility affect adjustment?
9. Cite data showing the distribution of adolescents and youths by rural and urban residence. How has urbanization affected city youth? Rural youth?
10. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of personal choice to the adolescent and youth.
11. Weigh biological and social variables as they help us understand adjustments of the adolescent and youth.
12. From what viewpoint is the adolescent-youth period the most critical one in life?
13. To what extent have social institutions met the needs of adolescents? Of youth?

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[10] Arthur Wallace Calhoun, "The Child Mind as a Social Product," p. 74 in V. F. Calverton and Samuel D. Schmalhausen, *loc. cit.*

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CHAPTER 5

Personality—Its Organic Foundations and Social Roots

ELEMENTS OF PERSONALITY

Personality is a composite of hereditary factors and developmental influences, of genes, and of social experience. The hereditary factors are of secondary concern to the educator; they are the province of the eugenist. The educator, like the parent and the community, must work with what heredity provides, molding and shaping the raw material into the finished product.

Personality is dynamic, a growing entity. Physiologically, it is vested with the capacity for maturation. Except as mutilated by environment, physical traits follow their predestined course from childhood to maturity. Psychologically, it is plastic, capable of an infinite number of modifications by external stimuli. Sociologically, it is dependent on the group to provide the patterns of development, for human nature is a group product.

Personality is vested with force and drive. This drive or motive force is in the realm of emotion and desire. What the organism wants it strives to get. Certain drives are inherent within the organism—the voice of bodily needs, primeval and universal throughout the animal kingdom; others are external, the voice of the group implanted in the motive system of the growing child.

The adolescent-youth group is already far along the road toward the point where motivations are so well conditioned by social values that organic drives are secondary. Social incentives supplement and even supersede physical ones.

On the inherent side, temperament persists; on the external side, culture patterns prevail. Social values become the goals of the person who has reached maturity.

To this view there is historical perspective. A generation ago motivation was explained largely in terms of instinctive drives, mechanisms present at birth that impelled the individual to strive for the realization of ends that his inherent make-up demanded. Since the eclipse of the instinct concept, the source for motivation has been sought in situations external to the organism, or in some combination of internal and external factors.

That there are organic drives within the person and that pleasure and pain are experienced in connection with these drives is self-evident. It is just as evident that socially conditioned drives may take precedence over bodily urges, so that they are sublimated or redirected toward the achievement of culturally established goals.

The desire to achieve status among one's fellows may become a ruling motive in a competitive society, may, in fact, become so universal that one might think it inborn. The individual focusing his interests on certain values may pursue them with such undivided effort that they become the ruling motive of his life, more vital to him than any physical desire.

PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIATIONS

Every individual is a unique combination of physical structure, glandular fluids, temperamental, emotional, and intellectual qualities. Although this is true, it is equally true that persons can be classed into types. Such classifications are not so specific or so reliable as the four blood types into which human beings are classified for purposes of blood transfusions, but nonetheless some classifications that have been developed by experts who work with persons and study personality are useful.

Plant has identified five basic traits in the psychological aspect of personality: (1) alertness, (2) complexity, (3) pliability, (4) temperament, (5) cadence.[1]

Alertness. Some individuals are so stolid in responding to new stimuli that they are unconscious of many forces of the environment. At the other extreme is the weather-vane type, those persons seeming to be constantly excited by every influence of the environment. The ever-alert type of person is in direct contrast to the stolid type.

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[1] The discussion which follows, as well as the classification, is based on James S. Plant, *Personality and the Culture Pattern,* Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, New York, 1937. The classification scheme was developed as an outgrowth of clinical observation.

Complexity. Some individuals seem to be made up of essentially one part, simple-minded persons who take themselves very seriously. They have a narrow channel of interests. In contrast are those whose personality seems to be made up of a great number of federated elements. These individuals with very complex patterns of organization can shift from one type of person to another, and in shifting view themselves in the previous role more or less objectively. The simple-minded can never stand off and laugh at themselves.

Pliability. A third important trait that tends to determine a personality type is the degree of pliability—the extent to which a person is a habit former and the ease with which he can adjust himself to new situations; in everyday language the person who is not pliable is the bullheaded one who clings to a purpose and rarely ever swerves from that purpose, regardless of what happens. At the other extreme is the person who is extremely pliable, shifting readily in response to many situations.

Temperament. Temperament refers to the tendencies toward introversion or extroversion. The extrovert is the bold, aggressive type who considers no man a stranger, and the introvert is reticent, retiring, and bashful. The extrovert is the tough-minded individual who expresses himself readily and who rarely has his feelings hurt; the introvert is extremely sensitive, easily hurt, has difficulty in expressing himself, and is secretive, being inclined to live within himself.

Between these two extremes is the ambivert, the individual who may tend toward extroversion in some respects and introversion in others, but who, if one takes his entire personality expression into account, falls between introversion and extroversion.

Plant believes that all children up to four or five years of age tend to be extroverts, but after that they begin to move into the temperament classification that they will occupy throughout life without much change. Although tendencies toward introversion or extroversion can be changed, there is a strong tendency to remain in the same general pattern throughout life.

Although tendencies toward introversion or extroversion are undoubtedly a part of native emotional endowment, adaptations in behavior are often necessary as the adolescent or youth is thrown into new situations. The following is the case of a boy whose natural temperament plus early experience led to rather extreme introversion. Naturally shy, he did not enter into athletic sports or make friends among his peers. While still in childhood, he lost his father. Being the only boy in a family of four girls, he was teased and ridiculed. Rather than establish play relationships on the outside, he had sat at home indulging in such introverted diversions as reading and playing the piano. Adding to his difficulties of adjustment in a play group was the mother's intolerance toward most of the usual forms of amusement indulged in by the play group. Then came the forced change which is described in his account as follows:

> During my fourth year in high school, I started clerking in my father's store. Never will I forget the first customers I waited on. I seemed to forget everything; I could not talk; if I had been able to, I would not have known what to say. I'll wager the customers thought I was a very dumb, senseless, horrible, detestable clerk. I'll admit, too, that I was. I believe that this work has done more to help me adjust myself to others than any other single thing in my life. I had to learn to be congenial, to be able to carry on an intelligent conversation, to be patient, courteous, interested, and active. These were difficult obstacles to overcome, but I have accomplished most of them and am striving all the time to finish the process.

The next account is that of a girl who probably would have been a normal ambivert if fate had not placed her in circumstances where normal social adjustments were impossible. In this new situation introversion was her only method of protection. The account follows:

> When I was nine, my mother died. For six months after her death, my whole family lived with an aunt and uncle. It was under their influence that I developed an inferiority complex. To begin with, I was seldom as well dressed as my cousin. Since my aunt looked upon our family as decidedly a charity case, she saw no reason for dressing me as well as her own daughter. Secondly, my aunt, although a kind woman in many respects, couldn't refrain from telling other people just how kind she was in caring for her brother-in-law's children. To an extremely self-conscious child, it was horribly embarrassing to hear myself discussed with everyone, on the streets or in homes. It made the situation worse that the aunt was an illiterate, tactless woman. My only refuge was to retire further within myself. So I developed more surely into an introvert personality and became classed as a "queer child."

Cadence. By cadence is meant the rate at which an individual works his way through to a goal in a new situation. Some individuals always stumble through life in the rear of every venture they undertake. At the other extreme are those who run and skip along the way, always seeming to be a little ahead of the game.

In addition to these traits which tend to be relatively unchanging in personality are attitudes or mental habits which develop early in life and which are resistant to change. One is the individual's attitude toward security, which is established at an early age. It is a sense of having a safe haven to which to flee from the difficulties of the cold outside world. Failing to develop this sense of safety and security through contacts with the mother and with the intimate home situation, the child develops anxieties that are hard to overcome.

Second is an attitude toward reality, an attitude toward the outer world and the way one will attack it, what one will do in facing it, whether he will challenge it in a courageous, extroverted manner or retire from it into a world of fantasy in an introverted manner.

Third is the attitude toward authority which determines the way the individual reacts toward authority. He first encounters authority in the home, usually of the parents or older brothers and sisters, then in the play group or the community outside the family. As he matures, he comes to recognize the broader human authority and the authority that is imposed by attitudes toward God and the powers controlling the universe.

The rest of personality is more changing, more modifiable from day to day by the experiences of the individual. There are the fluctuating inner feelings brought about by changes in body organs and general health and by the pressures of the environment.

A SOCIAL DEFINITION OF PERSONALITY

We have discussed at some length factors that make each individual a different person. To understand the elements of which personality is made and the way these elements affect the total pattern of one's life is much more important than to have a formal definition. It is doubtful, in fact, whether any fully satisfactory formal definition of personality has ever been written.

We must recognize, first of all, that personality is, as has been pointed out, in some respects relatively unchanging; that is, there are core patterns which give the life of the individual a consistency. There are many other traits which change rather markedly but which are always held in check to some extent by these core patterns about which the whole personality is oriented.

What we seem to mean by personality, viewed from a social standpoint, is a person's total effect on others. Obviously, we are not thinking primarily of what the individual is in reality or what he himself thinks he is, but rather of the way he affects his fellows. We say of an individual that he has a good personality or a poor personality, a strong personality or a weak personality, and apparently mean by this that he has a great deal of influence over others or, because of some weakness, fails to exercise great influence or to make a favorable impression.

None of us can tell fully what makes another individual influence us or makes us regard him as one of influence and prestige. Part of this effect depends on dress and physical appearance and part on other qualities which seem to be superior to the mere physical presence—gestures, tones, expressions of voice, and manner which make us feel that the individual is dynamic and forceful or that he lacks these essential traits to which we respond favorably.

A person may rate very highly in one group but very poorly in another in which he must play a different role. For example, the studious college professor who must know the facts, consider them impartially, present both sides of an issue to a class, and let them make up their own minds on the merits or demerits of the case, would rate very poorly among a group of politicians. So also the fluent, aggressive, extremely extroverted, and often superficial actor type of politician would get a very low rating among a group of research scientists.

This leads us to believe that the rating of personality by the group is determined in great part by the specific role or roles which a particular group approves. The traits required to perform one kind of social role may fail completely to fit the individual for a successful role in another social group. Great leaders of men are probably those who are capable of playing many roles more or less successfully. Specialists, however, are often those who can play only one role effectively and, because of this, devote supreme energies and attention to this role and achieve greatness equaling or surpassing that of the leader of men.

There is much superficial talk and there are many books on how to develop a pleasing and effective personality. There is no doubt something worth while in most of these books if one is thinking of the superficial courtesies that are essential to smooth and effective contact with one's fellow men, but to take this kind of advice too seriously is to do oneself irreparable damage. Each person, because of certain native tendencies of temperament and energy output, cadence, and other traits outlined above, has a certain natural trend in temperament which he may as well recognize and try to understand and make the most of. If he can understand himself and his interests, he is more likely to find an effective place in society than if he tries to recast entirely his personality in line with certain popular conceptions of the "pleasing personality."

This view has obvious practical meaning to those who direct the personality-forming processes of adolescents and youths.

PERSONALITY GOALS AS DEFINED BY OUR CULTURE

We often speak of the wants of adolescents as if they were unique and different from those of other age groups. For the most part they are not. As Barton has so aptly stated:[2]

> The problem of youth is, of course, inseparable from the problem of the adult world, of civilization itself. Hardly any aspects of the subject at hand can be isolated from the larger and knotty problems of the human adventure.

The adolescent-youth group wants what all people in our culture want: (1) recognition and status, (2) respect and social favor, (3) response and happy social interaction, (4) security and group acceptance, (5) experience and expression, (6) achievement and success, (7) happiness and freedom. They are not abnormal creatures caught in the emerging tumult of physiological development, but rapidly maturing social creatures quickened by their awareness of the demands of group life in which they are becoming full participants. They want what all people want. The problem of the school and the home and, in fact, of all social groups is to create situations in which these basic wants of adolescents and young people find satisfaction, or else to remove them from the sphere of adult values.

All civilizations are dominated by certain major patterns. These groupwide values become powerful motivating forces of individuals developing in them. Culture may shape personality in the direction of contemplation and withdrawal from an active attack upon social problems. Much of Oriental philosophy historically has been of this character. In our own culture some of the major compulsives which explain the direction personality formation and individual wants take are (1) the competition-success pattern; (2) the desire for bigness, strength, growth, greatness; (3) individual freedom and personal expression; (4) the notion of progress, reform, improvement, and change; (5) epicureanism, the desire for pleasure, sensual enjoyment.

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[2] John Barton, "Rural Youth: Problems and Possibilities," p. 1, *Stencil Circular* 195, *Extension Service, College of Agriculture,* University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., March, 1938.

There are others no doubt, but these seem to be at the forefront in the value scheme of our urban industrial civilization.

Let us consider briefly these patterns as they affect the social adjustment of the adolescent in his peer group, in the school situation, and in the total society. We are not assuming that these values are peculiar to adolescence or to youth. They are peculiar to our civilization and affect all age groups. They are of unique significance to the adolescent and youth because in his struggle to attain maturity, he must strive toward their realization.

Achievement and Success.

> When I was a very small child my father would hold me up in his arms and tell me to reach for the moon and stars. Not being able to reach them from the porch, we would go to the top of the mound of dirt over the cove and from there to the top of the woodshed. At last when he would carry me into the house I would be sobbing. How symbolic of my life has the above been! Always I have striven for things, never being content with what I had. Although I realize the importance of ambition, a characteristic deeply implanted by my father and mother, I know that I should not so often let it spoil my present pleasure.[3]

In our culture, with its emphasis on creative, energetic activity, we tend to worship achievement and make a fetish of success. As adolescents and young people assimilate the values of adulthood, they desire to be recognized as successful in some sphere of enterprise. Recall again the case of Joanne Rogers.

A large share of ego satisfaction in our culture comes from creative achievement. This is in part true because success brings ready recognition; it lends to prestige. Defeat and failure deflate one's ego and bring group disapproval.

While in college, the author trained a group of his peers to do door-to-door selling. The company offered a contract guaranteeing $375 cash salary, provided the individual would work ninety 8-hour days during college vacation. The contract was most generous considering the wage scale of the period. At first it seemed surprising that a company would dare make such an offer, but one who has done door-to-door selling knows that the company was taking no risk whatever. No young person is able to face the experience of failure again and again during a period of ninety days. He will either sell and make a much higher profit on a commission basis than that guaranteed in the contract or be out of the selling business in a few days. The experience of always being turned down cannot be endured.

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[3] From a student paper in the author's collection.

The competition-success pattern embodied in our philosophy of capitalism, with its historic reward for private initiative, is prominent in almost every phase of experience. It appears in the motivation of kindergarten and grade-school children and becomes one of the major forces in the high-school period where to excel is to succeed. Competition is the basis for grades, for attaining honors in some of the more voluntary school societies, in obtaining parts in plays, debates, music, and other school programs. The group play system is almost altogether competitive.

The heroes placed before youth are the successful: those who have accumulated the greatest wealth, who have made the most inventions, who have endured the longest in a tree-sitting contest, who have whooped the loudest in a hog-calling contest, or who have traveled the fastest in an automobile or airplane. As he grows toward maturity, the child cannot help becoming conscious that the competition-success system dominates the lives of adults in his family and in the community.

The dominance of this pattern in the school system, among the peer group and among adults, is likely to place the oversensitive young person in a position of strain, discourage him if he fails, or, if he succeeds, to make him a "show-off." It is unlikely, however, that the school system, no matter how intelligent its organization or how carefully planned its motivation devices, can eliminate this pattern which is so basic in American philosophy. Perhaps the school should not attempt to eliminate it but should try to create different kinds of situations in which pupils can succeed and be honored. It must do so if even a small proportion of adolescents and youth are to taste the stimulating, vitalizing thrill that comes with supremacy.

There is now too much of a tendency for the school to reward only athletic and scholastic success. The school peer group recognizes a third field, success in love-making. There are many other kinds of success, however, which should be made to appear of equal social and personal worth. We must teach that any kind of performance that brings personal enjoyment without danger to oneself or to others is worthy of pride and group approval. We must help each one choose and develop the talent in which he can be above average. We must help all to understand that not everyone can be a hero. To the extent we fail to temper the competition-success pattern we threaten the self-assurance among others of the masses of adolescents and youths.

Horney[4] has called attention to incompatibilities of our culture which result in neurotic difficulties for the individual. We believe deeply in the Christian ideals of meekness and humility, and yet in our competitive system have exaggerated traits of assertiveness and aggressiveness which are the exact antithesis of the spirit of meekness. We have made much of the concept of freedom for the individual, and yet many individuals find themselves surrounded by numerous factual limitations which become frustrating because of their unrealistic idealism.

> According to existing ideologies success is due to our own intrinsic merits . . . even the most normal person is constrained to feel that he amounts to something when successful, and is worthless if he is defeated. Needless to say, this presents a shaky basis for self-esteem.[5]

Calhoun also indicts our competitive pattern as a source of neurotic tension. He says[6] that "Common sense teaches us that cooperation is the only effective way of grappling with the problems of humanity," but that "our perverse social order will not let us be cooperative." This, he believes, makes the whole world neurotic from the accumulated strain.

Closely allied with the pattern of achievement and success is the desire for bigness, strength, growth, greatness, which has been reflected so often in American industrial and economic enterprise that it is a compulsive of no small importance in the motivation of young people. Every town wants to be bigger. The assumption is that the bigger town is the better town and the more desirable place in which to live. Every individual is taught to want to do big things, bigger things than have ever been done before. This is a wholesome and healthy challenge. Young people could and should be inspired by it, but here, also, as with all cultural values, there are discreet limits to its uses for personal motivation.

Persons vary greatly in their capacity to achieve. The great achievements of one youth might constitute an insignificant event in the life of another. The teacher must always limit expectations to the capacity of the individual with whom he is dealing. It is difficult to recognize the achievements of a child of modest ability or deficient background as being great achievements, but such they are in reality. If a teacher properly understands the situation, he must praise them as such.

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[4] Dr. Karen Horney, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time,* pp. 287–289, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1937.

[5] *Ibid.,* pp. 286–287.

[6] Arthur Wallace Calhoun, "The Child Mind as a Social Product," p. 83 in V. F. Calverton and Samuel D. Schmalhausen, *The New Generation,* Citadel Press, New York, 1930.

There is always a place in the schoolroom for showing that great men have had numerous helpers who were indispensable to their success. Great achievements in the mechanical and industrial world depend upon the cooperation of many hands and many minds that differ in skill and capacity. When one has discharged his obligation to himself and to his social group, when he has done the most of which he is capable at the time with the opportunities and abilities that he himself possesses, he has achieved greatness. Only with such ideas can a sense of personal worth be developed in every child regardless of his level of ability and privileges. The story of the widow's mite in the Scriptures depicts a kind of philosophy that is much needed to temper our American philosophy of greatness with a sense of democratic realism.

Recognition and Status. It probably reflects a basic pattern of American culture rather than anything innate in human nature, but early in life the American child gives expression to his desire for group recognition and begins an obvious striving for status. This struggle for recognition and status is a lifelong one. Every favorable token of social recognition gives the ego a boost, bolsters one in self-confidence, and gives one a greater sense of belonging. The adolescent wants to be recognized, not only by his peers as being one of them, but also among adults as being an adult, and among all people as being a worthy person. Those who cannot attain high status among peers often acquire adult values early and strive for status in adult spheres, real or imaginary. Joanne Rogers in imagination and in her work was playing the role of a real or potential worker in the foreign service, more or less ignoring any attempt to secure status through typical peer-group roles.

Numerous studies of the effect of praise by teachers, parents, or others on the behavior of children and their resulting performance in schoolwork show what a tremendous lift it can give to their egos and achievements in our culture where children and youth are conditioned to crave this kind of group response.[7]

All normal human beings require considerable ego support from a social group. No human being ever reaches the point where it is not a thrill to receive social approval or where he does not shrink and recoil from social disapproval. The simple query "How do you do it?" may make one's whole day brighter. Approbation for small successes or the pleasure of little attentions, all of these things provide ego stimulation and thereby strength to carry one through the days. Similarly, small bits of criticism can make life miserable, make every burden seem like a chain about the neck.

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[7] For an excellent summary of the effect of praise and other social incentives on individual performance, see Charles Bird, *Social Psychology,* Chaps. 3 and 4, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1940.

Young people are no exception to this common experience of mankind in a competitive society. In fact, they are probably more sensitive to praise and blame as they venture into the new social situations that are a natural part of their lives. Only by repeated success, increasing competence, and group-built self-esteem can they reach the point where they are able to ignore minor slights and live for long periods with a sense of confidence and self-assurance.

The adolescent is naturally hungry for evidence of the approval of his activities and thrives remarkably well on discreet praise. He may strive for all kinds of perfection or resort to almost any kind of attention-getting devices, sometimes awkward devices indeed, in order to gain attention and ego satisfaction. The less response he obtains from his group, the more likely he is to be abnormal in his quest for it. The extent of his craving for praise probably depends on the sense of security which he has received from his family and play group. The unaccepted child is likely to crave continuous group approval and response. The spoiled child, it has come to be realized more and more, is not the one who has been given too much but the one who has been denied that which every child must have: understanding, sympathy, and a treatment of equality.

With urban youth concern over peer-group status is likely to be uppermost; with farm youth, who associate less with peers, status in the adult group is likely to be of greater concern. With all youth in school situations "the other kids" complex is uppermost, being of more concern than status in the eyes of teacher or parent.[8] Always status is related to social role.

It is about as difficult to state concretely the elements that go into social status as it is to describe concretely the elements that enter into personality. Status is derived primarily from one's social role. The favored adolescent role comes in part from similarity to others of one's peer group, and yet certain differences in the roles played may bring status. Moreover, the kind of role that will bring status in one group may bring disgrace in another.

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[8] For a good discussion of this problem, see Lois H. Meek, *et al., The Personal-social Development of Boys and Girls with Implications for Secondary Education,* p. 51, Progressive Education Association, New York, 1940.

Into status making, therefore, go all of the complicated mechanisms of group evaluation.

Respect and Social Favor. No experience is more humiliating than group disapproval. No experience is more painful than that of being condemned by the social group to which one feels allegiance. The laughter of ridicule, the group reaction of scorn, is humiliation beyond endurance. We are able to laugh with others, but to be laughed at by others is the most rigorous of all social-control devices. So deeply embedded in our personalities is the desire for respect and social approval that only the toughened politician or baseball umpire can stand up against heckling. Ridicule is so painful that realistic teachers of public speaking set up heckling situations in their classrooms to toughen their pupils to actual situations which they may encounter in the rough-and-tumble of platform speaking.

Members of an Eskimo tribe are said to commit suicide when isolated from the tribe and ridiculed for violating group taboos. Durkheim,[9] the great French psychologist, considered suicide in Western society primarily a result of a sense of isolation from the group, a sense of no longer belonging. As a preventative he advocated the maintenance of intimate group ties, holding that he who travels through life with intimate company travels most safely. It is a significant fact that the suicide rate in the United States is lowest in wartime, when group solidarity is greatest, when every individual feels that he is wanted and has a part to play.

Group acceptance or rejection is then the most meaningful experience in the life of an individual at any age, but in adolescence acceptance or rejection is a thing of supreme importance because of the desperate struggle for status, recognition, and self-confidence that characterizes this period in life when the spheres of childhood activity are enlarging into the spheres of adult activity. In so far as it is practicable, it is the responsibility of the school, church, and family institutions to help see that every adolescent feels that he is wanted, to give him a sense of belonging.

Desire for Experience and Expression. All men crave experience and a chance to express the drives and interests of their personalities as formulated by their training. One great sociologist considered the desire for new experience to be a fundamental drive in personality.[10] He was inclined to analyze many of the behavior problems of adolescents and young people in terms of their desires for the stimulation of new experiences, the thrills of new ventures. The delinquent girl craved the excitement of new clothes, jewelry, meals in ritzy hotels and restaurants. Compared to these, no other values seemed worth while. So also the delinquent boy pursued the game for the thrills his delinquency brought.

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[9] Emile Durkheim, *Le Suicide,* Paris, 1912.

[10] W. I. Thomas, *The Unadjusted Girl,* Little, Brown & Company, Boston, 1924.

Certainly in our kind of culture, where we worship speed demons, publicize the feats of daredevils, gather crowds of hundreds of thousands to see someone go over Niagara Falls in a barrel or jump off a high bridge, this element of thrill is encouraged in the shaping of personality. The gambler's risk of the frontier has had a great place in American tradition, and it is likely to find a place among the ideals we hold before our children. Even the county fairs emphasize the spectacular in races, stunts, etc. Many of our playing devices, such as the roller coaster and the loop-o-plane, give the thrill of new experience. Our reading, radio programs, and motion pictures, also, are filled with the thrills of adventure, crime, and frontier daring.

When we consider all these facts, it is clear that the quest for new experience is deeply ingrained in our culture pattern. In training the individual, therefore, emphasis is placed on the ability to express oneself in creative activities—hobbies and recreation.

To say that adolescents and youths desire to express themselves through creative activity is simply to acknowledge, as in the case of the other traits outlined above, that they are susceptible to the kind of social values which our kind of culture perpetuates and instills within each individual. Adolescents are more sensitive to some of these values than older people who have found their niches and who move in a more confined circle of habit and social activities.

New experience has its value for youth. Confidence in coping with new situations is a product of one's capacity plus one's previous experience. Confidence grows as the building of experience makes possible the successful conquest of new situations. Youth's quest for new experience may, under the direction of idealistic teachers, ministers, or community leaders, lead in the direction of reform, even revolution.

Individualism. Under the large-family situation of a few generations ago, the child was surrounded by a group of relatives who ordered his world so that it was acceptable to the adult society. Under the modern small-family pattern, the child is given considerable freedom to follow his own inclinations. The result is that the personality of the modern adolescent and youth is highly individuated, with interests that may differ considerably from those of other family members. These individualistic interests and inclinations invariably throw the adolescent and youth into new social situations and personal relationships for which the family has provided no definition. It forces upon them the choice of good and bad, a choice which they must often make without having been given adequate standards or values to guide them.

Our concept of individualism and individual rights has reached its highest expression in the phrase "the sacredness of individual personality." This phrase implies that each individual has a right to be himself within the limits of reasonably prescribed social safeguards. Under this philosophy as now conceived, the child has certain rights to his own life regardless of parental prerogatives or authority. Even courts recognize this fact in cases of the extreme abuse or neglect of children by parents. It extends to the husband-and-wife relationship in divorces granted on the basis of mental cruelty and is acknowledged in the democratic philosophy of school administration which limits the rights of teachers as well as of pupils.

The assumption that individualism is an inherent right of all men has given the adolescent of today more room for development than has been common in most civilizations. At the same time, by virtue of the extent of freedom, it has imposed upon him problems of choice and decision which are the crux of many adjustment problems.

The young child is an individualist in his own right. His thoughts tend to be self-centered. He is catered to by adults, and his self-centeredness is given considerable freedom, but with the growing maturity of the adolescents the necessity of coming into the social vortex more fully creates the interesting problem of adjusting individuality to the broader social demands. Other-regarding attitudes play an increasing part in adulthood, for adults consider themselves as guardians of others, protectors, teachers, and economic supporters of the young and of the dependent old. The transformation from the self-centered attitudes of the younger child to the other-regarding attitudes of the socially responsible adult is by no means easy in a society that cultivates the development of the ego, caters to it by the competitive philosophy already discussed, and places an economic value on individual freedom and self-reliance.

The comment of the New York Regents' Inquiry report on this point is pertinent.[11]

> The interviewers felt that these young people were being taught the value of independence until it had become a vice rather than a virtue with them.

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[11] Ruth E. Eckert and Thomas O. Marshall, *When Youth Leave School,* p. 216, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1938.

> Scores of young people were found who seemed to feel that it was wrong and weak to seek advice. . . .

Desire for Love and Emotional Security. We teach the child to crave love and be loved by the practice of coddling and affection giving during infancy. This pattern has become the basis for persistent yearnings for affection.

Margaret Mead[12] compares adjustment in this sphere of our adolescents with those of Samoa. In Samoa the child never develops strong attachments to individuals. Families are large, and all children are treated alike. Several women and men attend the child. There is little difficulty growing out of sibling position. Sex is a casual experience without strong emotional attachments; it is considered merely a form of physical enjoyment.

It will be seen immediately that our culture contrasts almost at every point. Our strong, emotional attachments to individuals often lead to emotional involvements between brothers and sisters and to deep attachments between parents and children. At adolescence, when these deeper emotions must be shifted to a member of the opposite sex, jealousies and deep emotional wounds of parents or brothers or sisters may result. Also, in the pair associations of young people deep and abiding emotional ties are expected. Such bonds are not always enduring. One or both parties may suffer intensely because of a broken romance. The same problems may arise after an engagement or even after a marriage. In case of such emotional breaks, one member of the pair is often left seriously damaged in his emotional life because he wished the emotional relationship to continue. Also, in the end death breaks all emotional attachments between persons. In our society of deep emotional attachments, this makes death a personal tragedy for the surviving mate.

In our society of close personal attachments, deep emotional shocks resulting from breaks in childhood and adolescent attachments to comrades are not unusual. Consider, for example, the following case of a girl who suffered greatly from such a break:

> When I was twelve, the girl who at that time was my best friend suddenly threw me over for a new girl in town. This incident hurt me very deeply and changed me in several ways. Since that incident, I have always tried to associate with a group instead of one person. I lost all belief in the ability of a true friendship to exist. I always try to trust no one but myself.

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[12] Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa,* Chap. 13, William Morrow & Company, Inc., New York, 1928.

Students of personality as it is formed in our society are fairly well agreed that a sense of security reflects primarily the kind of emotional relationship that has existed between mother and child in earliest childhood. The child who has had a genuinely affectionate treatment by his mother is likely to feel that he belongs in the world and belongs not only to the family group but to other groups in which he participates. The rejected child, who has failed to develop this deep sense of security through his interaction in the family situation, is likely to feel that he is an unwanted member of society and to go through life painfully anxious for some evidence of affection and loyalty among those in whose association he is thrown.

Sometimes a deep, abiding religious experience may restore something of this lack of security which such a child may feel, but certainly his reactions to life are colored by the fact that he has missed this important kind of conditioning that is most productive in a sense of assurance in our kind of society.

Quest for Happiness as a Goal. Sorokin,[13] Harvard sociologist, has classified cultures into the idealistic and the sensate, thinking of the idealistic as those cultures which specialize in forms of art, music, and literature and which cater to the more refined aesthetic values of which the human being is capable, and the sensate as those which cater to the less refined drives and appetites of mankind. He feels that civilization tends to fluctuate between these two extremes. There is much evidence in American life to indicate that the sensuous extreme is prominent in at least many aspects of our culture.

Throughout much of history, except in the most ideal climates, man's life has been a continuous struggle to obtain food for survival. Until the development of the machine age, luxury, leisure, and pleasure seeking for the few were purchased by long hours of strenuous toil by masses of slaves, serfs, and peasants. The machine age has brought with it a great deal of leisure. The puritanic philosophy that pleasure seeking and recreation are sin has been replaced by a philosophy which is appropriate to the new age of recreation. Recreation, pleasure seeking, sensuous enjoyment, as a means of relaxation and for the constructive use of idle time, have come to be taken for granted in our urban industrial civilization.

This philosophy, wholesome in many of its aspects, yet dangerous in its extreme manifestations at many points, complicates the transition of adolescence and youth to adulthood. It makes difficult the transition from childhood to adulthood in the field of work experience, since work presupposes discipline, persistence in the face of monotony and fatigue, and other such habits which are in opposition to the philosophy of a leisure-seeking, pleasure-motivated economy.

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[13] Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics,* American Book Company, New York, 1937; also, *Man and Society in Calamity,* E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1943.

It also carries over into the love-making relationships. Advertising, movies, and fiction exaggerate the importance of sex attraction and love-making to the extent that it is little wonder that adolescents are inclined to consider it a legitimate form of personal gratification, a game to be played if one likes it. The same philosophy carries over directly into the institution of marriage and family. Rather than being considered a basic institution for child rearing, as has been true in most historical societies, marriage is considered a venture in personal happiness. The criterion of success in marriage is its making the couple supremely happy. Surprising as it may seem, whether the union produces children of sound heredity and good mind and whether it provides a happy and pleasant environment for the rearing of these children to responsible adulthood are entirely secondary considerations in thinking about marriage.

This peculiar emphasis of an urban industrial society needs correcting at many points if young people are to face life realistically, assume duty with the proper sense of responsibility, and make normal progress in the achievement of satisfactory life goals. It is important that they learn that happiness sought for itself is elusive and disillusioning. The deepest satisfactions and the most permanent gratifications of which the human being is capable come only in the pursuit of a balanced life program which shares responsibilities, bears a reasonable load of the world's work, and has proper regard for physical cleanliness, moral integrity, and social obligation.

It is difficult, of course, for adolescents and youth to learn this in a society where so few adults have learned it, but the fact that so few adults have learned it explains in considerable part why so many parents are poor parents and why so many teachers are poor examples for young people.

We are not likely to return to the stern puritanic philosophy of another age; that is unnecessary because that philosophy does not fit our time. On the other hand, extreme emphasis on sensual enjoyment for its own sake is certainly an epicurean philosophy which may make life a short venture of laughter and song. It is hardly conducive to the attainment of the best goals of a social order or the highest realizations of the individual.

In conclusion, personality, by virtue of hereditary predisposition, has certain bents and natural tendencies with regard to pace of activities, variety of interests, degree of social orientation, and temperamental qualities, but into every personality the culture pattern builds its values, goals, and standards. These become the social expectations by which personality is judged, the measures of every man of the social group. Personality integration is primarily in terms of unities built about the major values represented by the culture pattern. Social status, worth-while activities and interests, acceptable work, being built into meaningful social groups, having responsibility, being part of things and of people, having goals toward which to strive—these are the things that make for personality integration. A knowledge of these cultural values and goals, as well as of the nature of inborn predispositions, is essential to those who try to shape the personalities of adolescents and youth to fit the world in which they must live and serve.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Discuss briefly the hereditary and acquired aspects of personality.
2. What are the five basic traits of personality as outlined by Plant?
3. Show how the traits alertness and complexity affect the degree and extent of interests.
4. How does complexity affect one's ability to rate oneself?
5. What is meant by pliability?
6. Show how temperament affects one's approach to social situations.
7. Explain the meaning of the term "cadence." Do you think one who tends to be slow in cadence could change this basic pattern of reaction?
8. Define personality. What factors enter into the definition?
9. What are the goals or values that persons seek in our society? Show how these values are derived from cultural values prevailing in our civilization.
10. Show how the competition-success pattern may affect personality. Is this purely an individual value or one characteristic of our culture? Are all societies competitive in their scheme of organization?
11. Show how the competitive philosophy of our society may affect adjustment problems of adolescents and youth.
12. Discuss praise as it affects the adolescent. Why may the adolescent and youth be even more anxious about his status than the adult? Show how the desire for status increases concern over peer-group relationships.
13. Define the spoiled child in terms of recognition and status.
14. Show the effect of ridicule on the individual. How does it affect one's sense of belonging?

15. Discuss the importance of those who work with adolescents and youth giving them a sense of belonging.

16. Point out undesirable consequences of the desire for experience and expression. Desirable effects.

17. How does our concept of individualism affect the privileges and opportunities of adolescents and youth? Cite undesirable results of our highly developed individualism.

18. Compare our emotional attachments to individuals with customary relationships in Samoa. What problems arise from these attachments?

19. What factor is most deterministic of a sense of emotional security in our society of close affectional ties with individuals?

20. What mental state characterizes the insecure adolescent?

21. Discuss the implications of the goal of happiness to adolescent-youth adjustments.

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CHAPTER 6

The Experience World and Personality Formation

SOCIAL BACKGROUNDS AND BEHAVIOR PATTERNS OF THE ADOLESCENT

The equipment with which an adolescent enters the series of transitions that mark the experience of the individual in a complex society depends upon the kind of social climate in which he has spent his childhood. Conditioning milieus differ markedly in temperature. We begin, therefore, with the premise that social habitat determines in large measure the trend of development and the extent of development of the personality of the adolescent.

There are many social habitats in the American scene. We often think of North and South, East and West, and in so doing we are thinking not entirely of geography. We are thinking, also, and perhaps fundamentally, of the different patterns of life that are imposed upon human beings in these major sections of the country. When we think of the East, we think of the sophistication, mechanization, population density, and other influences that go into the making of personality in the most highly industrialized and urbanized section of the nation. When we think of the South, we think of cotton culture, the plantation system, the biracial division of population, the political Democratic party, the Bible belt, the integrated family pattern of the Southern culture in which personalities of that region find their roots. In fact, we think of the way these patterns of life become a part of the structure of personalities developed in that region. When we think of the West, we think of people maintaining many of the traits of the frontier, the venturesome, exploitive spirit of men with worlds yet to conquer, the more direct and perhaps less refined approach to situations, the greater freedom from the restrictive traditions of an older economic and social order, the vitality and vision of youth.

It is not these divisions, however, to which we plan to give major attention in our discussions of sociological habitat and its effect on the conditioning of American youth, for there is another division which is probably much more deterministic of the attitudes and philosophies than these regional divisions. We are thinking of country and city; for these, in fact, in all sections of the country are distinctly different kinds of social climates. To be born in one is to fail to understand fully the other. Understanding of the different conditioning processes of city and country is especially important today when there is a constant interchange of population between the two, especially of the youth group.

The one extreme is represented by the stable, isolated rural community where all of life is built about the family and where there is, in a very specific sense, no individuality; the other by the metropolitan community, individualistic, competitive, casual.

In the more transient areas of the metropolitan community the child reaches adolescence with the ability to shed experiences readily. He has no deep roots in any social soil. His values are likely to be a confusion of superficial experiences with many behavior patterns and systems of authority. The farm child developed in the other extreme environment is so deeply rooted in the mores, traditions, and folkways of the familistic group that he has little equipment with which to function anywhere outside the immediate social habitat. The transfer to another group during the period of adolescence or youth is likely to constitute a supreme crisis, since his emotional life, his system of values, his life objectives and goals, are likely to be in rather rigid conformity with the goals of the familistic group which have little place in the normal society of the larger world outside the neighborhood.

In American society most children develop somewhere between these two extremes. They approach adolescence with something of both backgrounds. In large metropolitan centers they probably approach adulthood with a greater complexity of personality, a less rigid system of social values, and a greater breadth of experience in social patterns differing from those of the immediate family, than do youth in smaller urban centers, villages, and open country. It is likewise true that more rural youth, especially those with farm backgrounds, approach maturity with deeper roots in family and neighborhood soil which bind them fairly closely to the restrictive standards and value systems of local groups. In spite of the greater mobility of farm people, in the larger school situations in states that have consolidated school systems, the vicarious experience of moving pictures and other influences provides a great range of stimulation for the rural youth; the farm youth in most communities still has a limited range of immediate experience with a diversity of social situations. His transitions to adulthood, if he goes beyond the bounds of the local community, are likely to be more difficult than those of the urban youth.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both of these systems of conditioning. Every personality, if it is to be integrated and sufficiently organized to follow a purposeful course, must hold to certain deeply implanted core values which become the focus of life's activities. It seems probable that the urban child is in greater danger of arriving at adulthood without having had implanted a set of core values which will become for him a motivating force toward well-considered life goals.

Although he probably has the advantage of having deeply instilled values and clearly defined goals, the rural youth may often, as he shifts to larger society and as growth widens experience, find that the goals he conceived so clearly in the primary-group situation are unworthy of his expanded interests, abilities, and desires for achievement in life. At this point he faces a difficult problem of reconstructing his personality and of redefining his entire situation in such a way that he may actually be in conflict with some of the values and goals of the old family-neighborhood group.

Thomas Wolfe, in the novel *You Can't Go Home Again,* gives a clear picture of this situation in his description of the experiences of an author. The family, in the small mountain town, thought that law and politics were the goal for which an ambitious, educated youth should strive. With this in view, they sent this son to the university. After having acquired an education, the young man was interested in writing, not law. The family held authors in disgust. He found himself an outsider among the family clan.

Conditioning in the great family, such as was common in the Oriental families of the past and such as characterized the pioneer family and still characterizes the mountain culture of the nation, has certain assets and liabilities in an age of mobility and of secondary-group urban experience. Under the large-family pattern the family is all. The individual is given little consideration except as a member of the family. The scheme of values and goals held by the family tends to become the pattern of life for the child. Since responsibility to parents and relatives is deeply ingrained, the sharing of common activities, mutual aid without pecuniary motivation, and deep fundamental loyalties to neighborhood and kinfolk are characteristic patterns. Such a life gives the child a deep sense of security and of belonging.

It gives him all the patterns for morality, for economic self-sufficiency, and for social behavior that are needed in adolescence and in adulthood providing he stays in the neighborhood and continues to function as an entity in the familistic group.

Most personality development historically has been of this character. In many parts of the world this is still the typical experience. Under this scheme of living, the responsibilities of adulthood gravitate to the child or young person as the elders die and those next in line take over responsibility for the family clan. In this kind of environment the struggles and questionings about moral issues so typical in the experience of urban youth in a complex society do not exist. There is little call for moral decision. All of life's situations have been defined by the elders. There is the continuous surveillance of group opinion to enforce conformity to the definitions by youth who mature in the family group. There are rebels, of course, who find the established system incompatible, but they are labeled rebels and everyone in the community knows who they are and they are accepted as such.

The difficulty with such conditioning in contemporary society is that many young people, as has been pointed out, migrate into the unfamiliar culture of the outside world, whereupon they find themselves little prepared to cope with the practical situations and the group expectancies of the more cosmopolitan society. They may be defeated by the new situation, may cast aside the old patterns too rapidly, and face personal disorganization as a consequence, or they may make adjustments far below their levels of ability because of their lack of training and skills and of social attitudes that make for successful adaptation. Those who succeed in making the transfer may often excel because of the new place given to thwarted ambitions. Those who fail usually feel that they can go back to the family nest.

On the other hand, those who go outside feel an obligation to the family group. In case of catastrophe or need at home, they usually feel it their duty to go back.[1] The knowledge that they can return to the family nest may, of course, be desirable from the standpoint of facing the new problems and adjusting to them. On the other hand, rather than try to adjust, they may give up and return home because of giving in to defeat too quickly or yielding to a persistent fear of new situations.

There is no better way to illustrate social processes that mold the individual for the social order than to compare more fully the experience of city and farm adolescents as developed by their respective environments.

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[1] For a discussion of such families in the United States, referred to by the French sociologist Le Play as "stem families," see Carl C. Zimmerman and Merle A. Frampton, *Family and Society,* D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., New York, 1935.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Personality is made and marred by experience. Every person at birth encounters an imposing world of group patterns which he will adopt as his manner of life. The social group thus has power to build attitudes and habits which in themselves will constitute the basis for the individual's social behavior. One who is placed in a restricted social group will have imprinted indelibly on his personality the patterns of this group, whereas one who contacts many groups will acquire a diversity of patterns. On the other hand, however simple or complex the social environment, there will be present in the world of the child social definitions adequate for meeting most life situations arising in the immediate environment.[2]

In comparing the advantages and disadvantages of the rural and urban child's experience as a factor in the development of his personality and in shaping him for the world in which he is to live, it must be recognized that no group situation is ever ideal and that few individuals are perfectly prepared for life. The human being is remarkably adaptable and has the capacity to make radical personality changes.

THE UNIQUE SOCIAL HABITATS OF RURAL AND URBAN ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

Farm Adolescents and Youth. The unique aspects of the habitat of the farm youth are (1) the semi-familistic family situation, which has already been described in some detail, (2) the restrictive influence of an integrated neighborhood where practically all group life includes all age ranges and in which adults determine activities, (3) the limited social experience of the rural school which even today is for the majority of farm youth a one-room schoolhouse where associations are confined to the neighborhood group.

Urban Adolescents and Youth. The distinctive characteristics of the urban habitat are (1) the small-family pattern in which relatives and large-family values and attitudes have little place, (2) emancipation of the child from the home at an early age and frequent breaks in the family itself, (3) the lack of neighborhood organization, consciousness, and control devices, (4) the predominant influence of peer-group associations in the large-school situation where age groups are stratified into large aggregates and where most social life is confined to the peer-age group exclusively with a minimum of adult supervision. Self-decision on the part of youth, rather than adult supervision, is characteristic.

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[2] For W. I. Thomas's classic discussion of the group's definition of situations, see his *The Unadjusted Girl,* pp. 41–44, Little, Brown & Company, Boston, 1923.

Village Adolescents and Youth. Village youth are in many respects in an immediate stage between the metropolitan and farm youth. In some ways their problem is similar to one and in some ways similar to the other, but in certain senses their problem is unique.

1. The environment is a primary-group environment, with family and neighborhood supervision. In this respect the atmosphere is comparable to that of the open country, although the environment may not be so restrictive in the amount of direct social experience.
2. The school system is likely to be somewhat larger and more cosmopolitan than the urban, and stratification of age groups is possible to some extent.
3. Power of self-decision is probably nonetheless at a minimum in that there is always the dominating supervision of elders who are not so much engrossed as farm parents and perhaps are inclined to give less liberty, at least in work matters, than are farm parents. There is not the opportunity to evade adult authority as in the urban community. The conservative, dead hand of adult authority is stifling to the normal activities of the village youth in many cases. Even the school may be frustrated in developing constructive and wholesome activities for youth.

THE CONDITIONING PROCESS OF FARM AND CITY CHILD COMPARED

Physical Environment. For the farm youth physical environment, of course, is still a major environment for purposes of adaptation, and much conscious effort enters into this phase of environmental adjustment. All of life is geared to the seasons. Folklore and scientific knowledge of plant and animal life relate very definitely to climate, soil, rainfall, geography, all the forces of a natural world.

Since the rural world is primarily geographical and biological rather than cultural, the forces of nature play an important part in the conditioning of the rural child. The weather, the seasons, the open spaces, the water, the wind, and the heavens are vital parts of his experience, and he learns their meaning as they affect his physical comfort and the economic welfare of the family.

The regularity and implacability of the laws of nature in the environment of the rural child discipline him as man-made laws could never do. He observes the futility of man's efforts in the face of drought, storm and flood, hail, and wind; he learns that damage to or destruction of the crop is one of those things that man cannot help; he sees life close up—sex, reproduction, growth, sickness, death, basic biological realities which urban culture veils from many children. He faces life on this level frankly and maturely as a matter of course. Overseriousness may result, but a certain amount of such realism is the essence of maturity and must be learned if one would function as a psychologically mature person in adult life.

For the urban youth, on the contrary, this phase of experience has been mediated by a huge superstructure of man's making. There man has developed relative immunity from immediate dependence upon soil, climate, rainfall, and other aspects of natural environment. Most of life is spent indoors where temperature, light, and other elements that affect creature comfort are under human control. Even adjustments to microscopic forms of life in the urban community are more highly regulated, and a huge system of social institutions has been developed to protect life and health—sanitary regulations, quarantine, food inspection, water testing, etc.

The following account of a college youth who shifted from a rural to an urban environment at twelve years of age illustrates well the difference in experience of the two worlds:

> I spent ten happy years on the ranch, isolated from the bustle and scurry of the city, devising my own means of recreation, raising pets, planting gardens, working with my father and mother, and getting into trouble, but possibly much less trouble than my cousins of the city. I enjoyed my associations with the play group.
>
> This happiness all ended abruptly in 1930, when I was twelve years of age. Of course, the termination was only temporary, but it was permanent as far as my twelve-year-old mind was concerned. My parents moved to Long Beach, Calif. Here I had to learn to live all over again, as I was to become surrounded by an environment that played and worked in an entirely different manner from that to which I had become accustomed. It was my first taste of city life. Problem after problem presented itself, bringing about a tremendous amount of personality conflict. Everything was new, and nothing about the city life, with the exception of the spontaneous wants of man, resembled the life I had

become accustomed to; even those spontaneous wants were realized in a far different manner from those in rural life.

The community life of the city was very hard for me to become accustomed to. On the ranch I had been free to do many things which were impossible for me to do in the more compact community of the city. I rode horses, worked in the fields hand in hand with nature, played in the woods, had my big dog, and went hunting and fishing in the stream that meandered through the ranch property. None of those pleasures could I have in my new urban environment. Living conditions were also much different. I have never been able to become accustomed to living in small apartments. I felt as if I were being shut in. . . .

The thing that bothered me most was starting to school in a new environment. The junior-high-school system was new to me. I had been going to a grammar school which included all ages up through the eighth grade, and from which one went directly into high school. In junior high the children were all near my own age.

I was very backward. My fellow students, wishing to include me in their circle, invited me to their dances and parties, but being self-conscious, I always had excuses ready. I didn't dance or play cards, as did most city children of junior-high-school age. This was very unfortunate, because it tended to instill an inferiority complex in my mind. Of course, I gradually began to mix with the fellows, and by the time I entered high school, had partially become accustomed to the new life I had been forced into. I became more aggressive and became more active along social lines.

A great contributing factor was football. Although I was too light to play enough to make my letter, I played a considerable amount and was, seemingly, liked by my teammates. I made many friends among the players, and those friendships helped me to overcome the inferiority complex which I possessed.

I turned out for yell leader in my second year of high school and rose to the position of head yell leader in my third year. This drew me into many new and enjoyable social circles. I lost my inferiority complex and soon had a superiority complex. It was of short duration, however, and disappeared entirely when I entered college, took a back seat, and realized that I was only a normal person after all. In high school I had been a leader, envied by many; but in college I was just another student, which was as it should have been.

Urban life, I believe, has proved to be a great factor in converting me from an introvert type to a more extroverted personality type. While on the ranch I lived within myself and took little interest in things about me; but in the city I soon began to consider happenings of the community and to take general interest in matters external to myself. Soon I began to participate in many activities within and outside school.

Psychosocial Environment. Many personality patterns become relatively fixed early in life, being deeply ingrained in the preschool age.[3] In all sections of society these early years are spent under the influence of the family. The complete dominance of family patterns in the experience of the child lasts longer on the farm than in the town or the city, and habits become more deeply fixed; consequently, the problem of interpreting the outside world in terms different from the values of the immediate family is more difficult for the farm than for the urban child.[4]

In extremely isolated areas family ideas about religion, politics, vocations, and life in general are likely to be perpetuated with relatively few changes from generation to generation. Neighborhood isolation produces homogeneity. The more isolated a people, the more certain may one be that the prevailing values will dominate all their interests and activities; if intellectual achievements are not respected, intellectual development is sought only by the daring or ambitious; if simplicity is characteristic, personality develops without sophistication, the established customs and traditions forming the life outline. In some communities undue respect for material objects has been ingrained through long periods of struggle for survival; in others an appreciation of spiritual things supersedes problems of economic security; in still others cultural traits of foreign origin are maintained by a purposeful isolation and aloofness. In the rural community the ambitious individual is circumscribed by the knowledge, information, and social experience to which the community limits him. Many farm communities do not provide a live atmosphere for mental stimulation, and only as the individual contacts neighborhoods beyond his own does he obtain visions of new interests and new possibilities.

The child, absorbing the family and neighborhood patterns, which often are similar, may form an idealistic concept of human nature. Because of his submergence in his own special milieu, he seldom sees the way others live and hence acquires little information concerning other groups and classes of society. In many rural primary groups he may never see certain perverse elements of human nature expressed; in others he may see little aside from the sordid. In a dynamic society the pervasive conditioning influences of the primary group characterize at most only a limited period in life—childhood and early youth. The chief difference between conditioning in urban society and in the more progressive portions of rural society consists in the fact that the rural child's experience is limited during a longer period in early life.

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[3] John B. Watson, *Psychological Care of Infant and Child,* W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1928.

[4] S. M. Gruenberg and B. C. Gruenberg, "Education of Children for Family Life," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 160:205–215, March, 1932; also see Lawrence K. Frank, "Social Change and the Family," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 160:94–102, March, 1932.

Factual data on the conditioning of the farm and city child are not extensive. Two early studies are of significance, one by Baldwin and his colleagues working in the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station at the University of Iowa; [5] the other by the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection.[6]

Most of the field work for the Baldwin study was done in the middle twenties (1923–1927), but many of the influences characterizing that decade still exist in the numerous rural sections where one-room rural schools persist.[7] Many of the farm children were found to be extremely shy.[8] Schoolteachers commented upon the fact that some children upon entering the first grade would not speak for several days.[9] Visitors in rural homes were often avoided by the children, who crawled under the table or hid behind the door or even ran out of the house. The authors conclude that "perhaps the outstanding characteristic of children in the one-roomed school is their aloofness." In comparing two different communities, they observe that the more restricted the environment, the more likely is the child to conform to the patterns of his elders; the fewer the influences from the outside, the more likely is he to conform to the patterns of the locality group.[10]

The attitudes of parents toward their children and the nature of their attempts at guidance were found to be of fundamental importance.[11] Some farm parents expressed little interest in the school even though their children attended, did not consider it necessary to give their children advantages, required them to work hard at an early age and to walk long distances to school even in inclement weather. Some even opposed the serving of hot lunches at school, and a few refused to buy their children needed school supplies. Many were in the habit of opposing anything progressive in the community, even such organizations as had constructive programs; they would not permit their children to participate in the sale of tuberculosis stamps because they assumed that there must be graft hidden somewhere. Some opposed organizations generally on the principle that their programs would cause an increase in taxes even though no such connection was evident. Of those who wanted to give their children opportunities according to their conception of the best, many had no idea of what the best was; some felt that an eighth-grade education was ample, since that was more schooling than they themselves had had. In several families the accumulation of property was the major goal, to the exclusion of all other interests. In the main, parents with the foregoing attitudes were of foreign birth or were second-generation immigrants; usually the father dominated the family.

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[5] Results are published in Bird T. Baldwin, E. A. Fillmore, and Lora Hadley, *Farm Children,* Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1930.

[6] White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Adolescent in the Family,* Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1934.

[7] See the chart on p. 414 for the number of one-room schools in the United States in 1950.

[8] Baldwin, Fillmore, and Hadley, *op. cit.,* p. 121.

[9] Back of this behavior may have been the home training of the child which required that he be seen and not heard. This idea was prominent in patriarchally dominated foreign settlements of the last generation and to a lesser extent in all farm homes.

[10] *Op. cit.,* p. 48.

[11] *Ibid.,* pp. 44–46.

In the one-room school district the children had no contact beyond their immediate community. Parents in some of these localities, the authors suggest, may have felt that they were doing much for their children, when in reality they were doing little to prepare them for the larger social experience of the life outside, because they themselves had no insight into manners of life different from their own and no experience with methods used by outside groups.

In contrast, another community is described in which education is valued above work, in which spiritual values are placed above the materialistic. Here, as in many communities, there were rural parents who constantly strove to keep in touch with important social changes, who borrowed much from people of other rural areas or of town and city, who were interested in giving their children opportunities far beyond those they themselves had had, and who favored the progressive development of rural institutions.

The point to be noted is that in a situation where the family has a dominant influence, the values and attitudes of the family have a great deal to do with the personality of the child. The rural family in isolated sections, and perhaps in most one-room school districts, has an almost fatalistic influence over the child because there it still exercises many functions that in the city have been taken over by other institutions. Unless the child in such a community has opportunities through the family, he has none or comparatively few. Urban children with a variety of social experience outside the family are not so limited.

The report of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection,[12] which deals with home activities in the education of the child, is of special significance in that it is concerned with some of the more intangible effects of family training. Although, like others in the field, the study leaves much to be learned, it points out certain important aspects of the situation. The gist of the findings is as follows:

The farm child spends much of his spare time with his parents or under their supervision, the home and farm environment being his chief playground; most of his evenings are spent at home; he has tasks about the home in a much higher proportion of cases than do urban children, and he associates with his parents both in leisure time and at work. Reading and studying rather than group activities occupy his evenings.

The report states that a somewhat higher percentage of urban than of farm children have scores indicating good personality adjustment. The urban child learns the skills necessary for urban living, and the farm child learns the skills necessary for farm living. Considering the drift of population from country to city, the committee suggests that one should deplore the lack of education for urban living among farm adolescents rather than the lessened home activities of urban children.

Two pursuits of children that seem to be distinctly urban are going to the movies and taking walks. The one activity that is distinctly rural is reading. All other recreational activities that are favorites among country children are also favorites among city children.

This report challenges the widely held idea that the farm family is more united than the urban on the basis of findings to the effect that farm children are more inclined to criticize their parents than are urban children. The authors suggest that perhaps it is the too close association between parent and child which results in antagonism, or that perhaps there are other influences in farm life which tend to alienate parent and child. Possibly too much work in which the parent is the taskmaster causes conflict in the farm home. The fact that parental education and child-study groups in the urban community have made for more intelligent parenthood may also explain in part the differential in urban and rural family harmony.

With regard to the problem of family tensions, W. G. Mather and Mildred B. Thurow report that there is more tension between father and children in rural homes than in urban homes, although there is less tension between the mother and the children in the rural family. Children are most satisfied with their family life in the large city. Farm families rank second with small-town families, revealing the least satisfactory parent-child relationships.[13] Leland H. Stott has reported the results of an extensive study of 325 high-school boys and 370 high-school girls from farm homes in Nebraska.[14] The group ranged from eleven to twenty-two years of age. He makes no comparison between farm children and those from town and city, but relates certain family characteristics making for successful personal development. The following are found to be highly important to the adjustment of the farm child: attitude of welcome on the part of the parent toward the child's friends in the home, having good times together in the home as a family group, infrequent punishment of the child, a minimum of nervousness on the part of the parents, display of affection between parent and child, having nothing in the behavior of the parent which the child particularly dislikes.

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[12] White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Adolescent in the Family*. On pp. 158–179 is a subcommittee report developed under the chairmanship of Ernest W. Burgess, sociologist, entitled "Family Activities, Celebrations and Recreations."

Nye,[15] in comparing the adjustments of adolescents with their parents, finds that children in farm homes are the least well adjusted. Studies[16] at the State College of Washington similarly show that there was less happiness in the childhood homes of college students coming from rural homes than from urban homes (see Fig. 10).

The handicaps of personality due to conditioning in farm homes often carry over into the adjustments of the teen years. Elias,[17] in a study of 5,500 high-school seniors in the state of Washington, where most young people reach the high school via the consolidated school, finds that more of the farm group than of any other is concerned about being able to express themselves well (see pictographic chart). This is a particular problem of the farm girls, a third of whom checked it.

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[13] From an unpublished doctor's thesis by W. G. Mather, Jr., "A Statistical Analysis of Family Relations Based on Students' Autobiographies," reported in Dwight Sanderson, "Rural Family," *Journal of Home Economics,* 20:223–228, April, 1937. See also Mildred B. Thurow, "A Study of Selected Factors in Family Life as Described in Autobiographies," *Cornell Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 106, Ithaca, N.Y., 1938.

[14] Leland H. Stott, "The Relation of Certain Factors in Farm Family Life to Personality Development in Adolescents," *Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 106, Lincoln, Neb., 1938.

[15] Ivan Nye, "Adolescent-Parent Adjustment—Rurality as a Variable," *Rural Sociology,* 15:334–339, December, 1950.

[16] Arlene Sheeley, Paul H. Landis, and Vernon Davies, "Marital and Family Adjustment in Rural and Urban Families of Two Generations," *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 506, Pullman, Wash., May, 1949.

[17] L. J. Elias, "Farm Youths' Appraisal of Their Adjustments Compared to Other Youth," *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 513, Pullman, Wash., December, 1949.

Studies of college girls show that farm girls carry over into college the retiring traits which are characteristic of an isolated upbringing (see bar chart).[18]

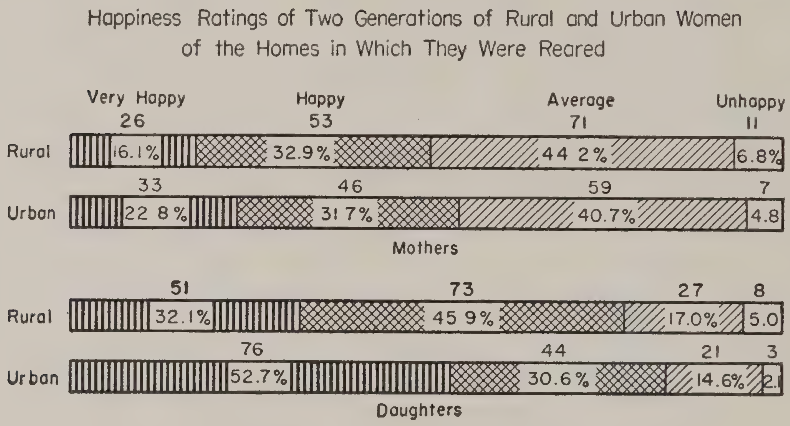

Fig. 10. Homes Are Happier Now Than a Generation Ago.

Observe that the daughters rated their childhood homes in the happy and very happy groups more often than did their mothers, and that urban homes in both generations were rated in the happy group more often than were rural homes. (*Arlene Sheeley et al., "Marital and Family Adjustment in Rural and Urban Families of Two Generations," Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 506, *Pullman, Wash., May,* 1949.)

We recognize, of course, in comparing rural and urban youth, that with the increase in contacts and privileges for those in open-country and small-town areas, extreme differences between town and country have long since disappeared.

THE MARGINAL POSITION OF ALL ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

Sociologists and psychologists have made considerable use of the concept of the "marginal man," meaning the individual who is in the state of bridging two cultures. The concept is most strikingly illustrated by the position

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[18] Paul H. Landis, "Personality Differences of Girls from Farm, Town, and City," *Rural Sociology,* 14:10–20, March, 1949.

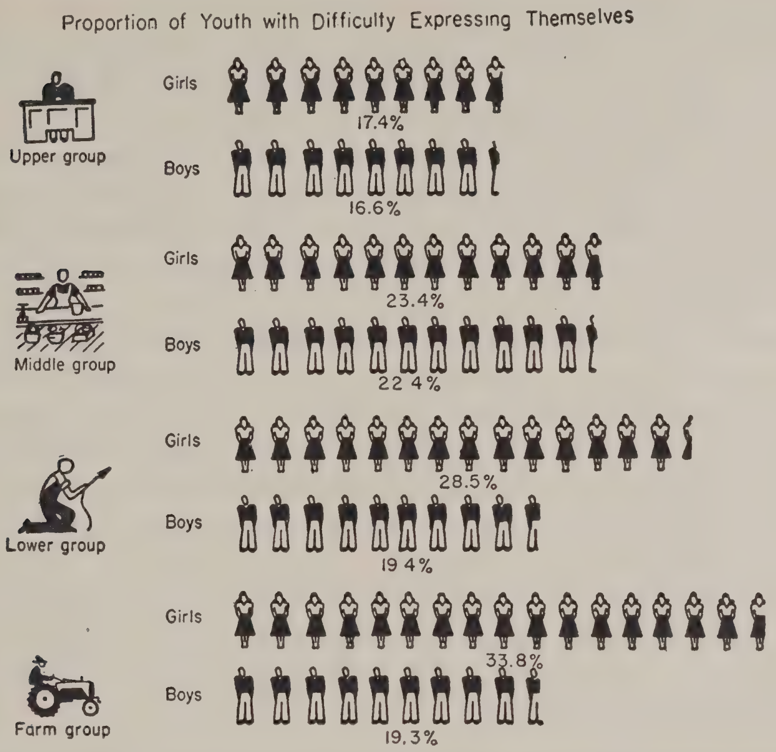

FIG. 11. MORE FARM GIRLS THAN OTHERS HAVE DIFFICULTY IN EXPRESSING THEMSELVES.

Data are for 5,500 high-school seniors in the state of Washington. Occupational classification is that developed by Sims, in which the farm group is kept separate. (*L. J. Elias, "Farm Youths' Appraisal of Their Adjustments Compared to Other Youths," Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 513, *Pullman, Wash., December,* 1949.)

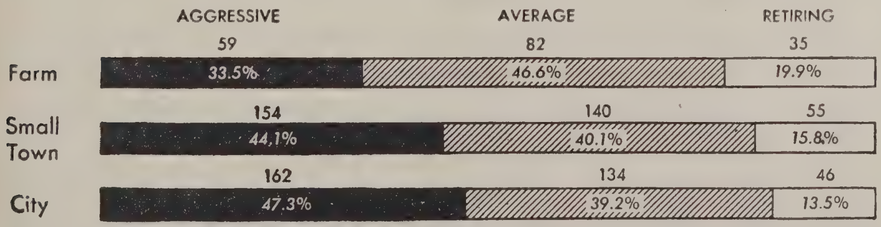

FIG. 12. PERSONALITY CONDITIONING IN AN ISOLATED ENVIRONMENT CARRIES OVER INTO COLLEGE.

Data are for girls at the State College of Washington, and ratings are on the Bell inventory. (*Paul H. Landis, "Personality Differences of Girls from Farm, Town, and City," Rural Sociology,* 14:10–20, *March,* 1949.)

of the foreigner who is bridging the Old World culture and the New in the necessary process of assimilation that every foreigner meets. Each individual in this position experiences a certain amount of culture shock which may result in the complete disorganization of his personality, even to the point of mental disease or to the breakdown of his moral codes and system of social self-control leading to moral delinquency, or it may on the other hand lead gradually to a new integration of the person in which both cultures have a part, usually the new coming to play the predominant part in determining behavior patterns.

The most severe situation is that of the immigrant child who must of necessity assimilate in a wholesale manner the culture of the new area. This almost inevitably leads to conflict between the parent and child generations, which in an urban culture usually ends with the child's breaking entirely away from the family pattern and very often with his assimilation of an undesirable American culture pattern in areas where delinquent gangs tend to establish culture norms for the child.

In a certain sense almost every adolescent and youth some time between the ages of twelve and twenty-five goes through a longer or shorter period in which he is to a limited degree a marginal man. Arlitt has described this marginal position as follows:[19]

> The adolescent has for generations been regarded as an individual who is adult when the home and the school desire him to be so, and who automatically becomes a child when again the school or the home wishes implicit obedience or some other type of childish behavior from him.

Most of the delinquencies of youth are, in fact, as Van Waters has pointed out, a part of the sanctioned roles which adult members of the community carry out without group condemnation.[20]

The adolescent and youth must bridge the culture of their childhood, that of their family and small local group, and that of the larger society into which they must fit themselves to function as adults. The degree of culture shock experienced is a product, first, of the temperament of the individual, the degree to which he is sensitive to striking differences in behavior patterns, and second, to the degree of contrast between the family and neighborhood culture in which his personality has been formed and that of the larger secondary-group sphere in which he must function as an adult.

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[19] A. H. Arlitt, *The Adolescent,* p. 217, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1938.

[20] Miriam Van Waters, *Youth in Conflict,* p. 128, Republic Publishing Co., New York, 1925.

Without doubt in our culture the rural youth from the more isolated farm environment suffers the greatest culture shock of any group, provided he moves out into larger social spheres as he must do if he attends a consolidated high school or if he takes up an urban vocation located in a large metropolis. With this extreme contrast in pattern of life, vocation, and general social atmosphere, the youth is likely to experience extreme culture shock and suffer intensely in the process of readjustment to which he is subject. In many cases he fails to make an adequate transition to the new culture pattern.

Almost equally severe is likely to be the experience of the youth who, beginning in the poorer urban laboring classes or as a son of a sharecropper or farm laborer, by applying intelligence in the schoolroom and in later life quickly rises from a low standard of living into the more successful business and professional classes, so that by the time he is twenty-five or thirty he lives in a sophisticated environment which is foreign to his own upbringing and which places a great deal of social distance between himself, his parents, former friends, and neighbors.

It is not to be denied that there are advantages in experiencing this kind of culture shock and in undergoing the painful adjustments that are consequent to it. The most successful people produced by a social group are not necessarily those who are the most happy or best adjusted in life. Extremely high achievement is in many cases a product of maladjusted individuals who, because they cannot fit naturally into social situations in which they are placed, pour abnormal energy into achievements which will bring recognition, thus making them feel superior and satisfied and helping to cover the sense of social inadequacy that otherwise would be unbearably painful.

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT AS A GOAL

If the foregoing considerations have merit, as they are presumed to have, one cannot make perfect social adjustment a major goal in the direction of the life of the individual. Perfect adjustment is impossible in an open-class society which stresses the principle of competition and struggle and which holds the philosophy that the best man in all situations should win. It is inevitable that many upstarts, without the superficial coating of manners, customs, and etiquette of the privileged classes, will burst through the upper levels of society and achieve a measure of greatness that is entirely incompatible with their own immediate ancestors' occupational and achievement record. It is of some significance that rural people seem to contribute an abnormally high proportion of teachers in education and the ministry.[21] It is hardly likely that all these people can be well-rounded individuals equipped to function perfectly in the social situations in which they find themselves. It is just as true that perfectly adjusted individuals may and very often do fail to achieve the degree of greatness they are capable of achieving since completely satisfying social adjustment is to many individuals a kind of opiate which tends to deaden the spirit of striving to satisfy insatiable ambitions such as are essential to calling out the best energy of the individual.

These conclusions bring under question our whole system of social values, their desirability, and validity. Is individual happiness the goal to be set before adolescents and youth, or productive usefulness? Is perfect individual adjustment the social objective, or do we prefer a nation of inventive, progressive, dynamic individuals who become supermen because they fight to overcome frustration? Is contented individual well-being the goal of life for the youth, or creative social enterprise? These goals are often contradictory. Little wonder the adolescent and youth often sense the strain in selecting life values and in setting life goals for themselves.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the influence of general social background on personality development.
2. Show how differences of social background affect adjustments of adolescents and youth. Cite typical examples.
3. Present arguments in favor of a stable environment from the standpoint of personality formation. Arguments against it.
4. Compare the personality-forming process among young people in historic societies with that in urban society today.
5. Explain how social definitions affect one's meeting issues of life.
6. Compare the unique patterns of farm, urban, and village life that have a bearing on the personality development of adolescents and youth.
7. Compare farm and city children with regard to experience with nature forces and reactions to them.
8. Compare farm and city children with regard to influence of the family. How may this affect adjustments to the world outside the family?

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[21] For a summary of studies, see the author's *Rural Life in Process,* 2d ed., Chap. 8, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1948.

9. Show how rural neighborhood patterns may be deterministic of the attitudes of adolescents. May these neighborhood patterns also restrict their opportunities? Explain.

10. How did rural and urban youths compare in proportion with good personality adjustment? Explain possible reasons for the difference.

11. In what respect do rural and urban adolescents and youth differ in recreational activities?

12. How do urban and farm children compare in regard to closeness of relationships between parent and child? What are possible points of friction affecting parent-child relations on the farm?

13. Discuss the marginal position of the adolescent-youth group.

14. In our society are urban or rural youth likely to be in a more difficult marginal position?

15. State the case for and against perfect social adjustment.

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CHAPTER 7

Personality Stress in Adolescent-youth Social Relations

PERSONALITY CONFLICT AS RELATED TO SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Self-consciousness, the sense that one is different from other people, develops early in life. Some time later comes the consciousness that one is many selves rather than simply one self. This consciousness of being many selves probably reaches its height during early adolescence, when the child begins to encounter a more complex social environment and to associate with an increasing number of groups.

One of the difficult problems for the adolescent, then, is to maintain sufficient unity in his personality to harmonize these selves. The integration of one's social selves into a complete unit is the essence of emotional maturity and presumably the essence of emotional adulthood. It is, of course, recognized that many individuals never achieve this integration and never become adults in their emotional life. Integration of the personality, however, about certain core selves is essential to inner harmony.

Presumably, the ease with which this integration is brought about depends a great deal upon the complexity of the situation the adolescent faces, as well as upon his own individual temperament.

In a simple rural society these problems of integrating the personality into a unified whole are not particularly difficult because in such societies the family clan, consisting of a large unit of relatives who live together in a neighborhood, maintains common standards. The child has integration in his personality by virtue of this culture pattern which, in fact, developed in him only one self. Peasant cultures have been of this sort and tend to develop single-mindedness. It is this single-mindedness to which we no doubt primarily refer when we talk of the peasant mind or the rural mind in contrast with the urban mind.

In the complexities of an urban civilization the individual develops many social selves, and in a limited sense a manifold personality. His experience is in his groups, which hold different goals for life, advocate different values, and expect different patterns of conduct. It is in these complex situations that modern youths usually find themselves. The problem of integrating the various social selves or "club selves," as William James called them, becomes a real one.

It is recognized that some individuals are incapable of sensing the complexities of their environment. They tend to go on with single-mindedness, more or less oblivious to the various group influences which they experience. These individuals are not likely to suffer extreme personality conflict; they may come in conflict with their environment and with various groups in their environment, but their single-mindedness keeps them plodding forward in one direction.

It is in adolescence and youth that the person is likely first to be conscious of the great diversity of moral interpretations, ethical philosophy, codes of conduct, rules of the game, or whatever one may wish to call the systems of standards that characterize different groups.

The experience of the disturbed conscience is prominent at this stage. This is in part because the adolescent, in making his first ventures outside the primary group, has not yet become toughened by frequent violations of primary-group codes and, therefore, has a sensitive conscience. Moreover, the average adolescent or youth has not had the toughening experience of refusing to participate in group activities which are not fully in line with his own previous personality development. This more selective participation gradually becomes a part of adulthood when one has finally settled on the pattern of life he wishes to follow.

As the youth approaches adulthood, in the normal process of growth and maturity, he comes to select those groups and associations which harmonize with his ethical and moral ideals and with his goals and value judgments. In so doing, he limits his participation in social activities to group activities that are in harmony with his life objectives and ethical values. Not that any person entering a complex society ever reaches the place where he evades all personality conflict due to conflicts in group valuation; complete isolation from groups of different standards from those he holds is an impossibility in a highly mobile and complex society.

The conflict of the social selves as they become identified with social situations which are themselves in conflict is well represented by the following account from the author's collection of student papers:

I was born on a large Western wheat ranch, the second child and eldest daughter in a family of seven. My parents, middle-aged at the time of my birth, had recently moved from a tobacco plantation in Virginia. They had grown up there, and the morals and customs of society in the old South were well integrated in their personalities. In the South the pioneering stage has long passed; in the Far West many attitudes of the frontier persist.

My family had come from ancestors of high social status in their former community. Their ideas of perfection in behavior were positive, well defined, and very definitely influenced by religious experience. One did not judge people by such superficial standards as beauty, wealth, or education. Judgment was based on those more lasting and spiritual qualities which characterized "quality folks." These qualities included manners, respect for authority, unselfishness, honor, hospitality, morality, and family background. No reason in the world was sufficient to excuse one from even so much as a display of unwillingness to obey someone in authority. If one did disobey, it was a source of much humiliation to the family. This family disapproval was the most efficient method, and practically the only means of control used with the children.

Another important trait was that one should never hurt someone else's feelings except for a legitimate reason. In the case that there was good reason, then one felt justified in completely "burning the person alive." But even in such instances one was supposed to maintain a certain dignity—a reserve that was never broken down. One mark of a fine person was his perception of the feelings of those about him. This sense was developed to as high a degree as possible.

I myself always addressed my elders by their title. It was a violation of an important point of behavior not to do so, and a source of shame. All my elder cousins were addressed as "Cousin Mary," "Cousin John," and so forth. The children in the western neighborhood thought this queer.

One never displayed an emotion unless it was a desirable one. Crying in public, laughing loudly, showing one's disappointment in not receiving an honor, or one's pleasure at someone's misfortune—these were serious misdemeanors. One was ashamed of those who violated this standard, and the guilty one was looked upon with so much disapproval that seldom did he repeat the offense.

Smoking was not taboo for men, but for women to smoke was terrible. They would no more think of smoking than of doing farm work or going somewhere at night unescorted by either an older woman or a man. The men in the family considered it their duty to protect women, who were supposed to be clinging vines. It was a source of much shame for a man to allow a woman's name to be slandered in his presence. It made little difference if the remark made were true or not. Much the same feeling existed in regard to one's friend.

Women were not supposed to be burdened with knowledge of finances, although the wife often by indirect methods had a great deal to say in business matters. Her place was supposedly in the home, acting as hostess, training the children, and guarding her health. Above all things, she was not supposed to dominate her husband; but if anyone displeased her it was her husband or brother or father who settled the matter, especially in the case of her being slighted or insulted by another man. The matter of family and personal honor was regarded with great seriousness.

A promise was as sacred as anything could be. For instance, if one lost a thousand dollars because of an unimportant promise, one kept that promise without flinching. Furthermore, the loss was never openly regretted.

Excessive drinking was looked upon with disgust, although drinks with dinners and so forth were thought to be quite in order. Drinking parties were considered to be completely below the dignity of folks of quality; only common people had them.

If one had little money, he would sacrifice practically all the material things of life before his pride would allow him to accept a loan under certain conditions. One could borrow with a clear conscience from a person of high moral standing and of equal social status with himself. But to borrow from some common person, or someone who had little social standing, was seldom done. A person did nothing to increase his financial standing or reputation that did not conform to the highest ethics of the code of honor. If one starved to death, one did so willingly, rather than accept something from a person who had stained one's honor.

The family background of any person was taken seriously into consideration in judging that person. It was a profound belief in the family that swans do not come from a crow's nest. However, if one's behavior was excellent and one was accepted in every other respect, a poor family background was more or less disregarded. It was not the family name that counted, but they firmly believed that only with a good background could one have the other desirable traits.

As to their feeling of the relation of the white to the Negro, there was no doubt in their minds as to what they believed. Negroes were regarded as very desirable in their place. But that place was not on an equal plane with whites. The respectable Negro was not despised, except when he overstepped his privileges, and every person of good social standing knew the Negro's place. A Negro cannot feel equal to a white—as soon as the white gives him equal privileges, the Negro feels superior, because the white, in doing so, has violated the code of conduct expected of him both by his own race and also by the inferior Negro. Those who made an attempt to convince them of the injustice of the fixed system of accommodation under which the races live in the South were looked upon with disgust and a slight feeling of contempt. Those who merely believed in race equality, but did not project their beliefs, were looked upon with both pity and ridicule because of their utter ignorance of the situation.

In the West my family was proud of their different culture. They avoided primary-group contacts in the new community and guarded against any assimilation of its culture into their own life patterns.

During the first five years of my life my experience was almost entirely within the family group. There was little conflict. I accepted without question the standards of my family. Respect for authority, generosity, and manners of the Southern culture were transmitted to me, both formally and informally, and I readily assimilated them. My range of participation was limited. My play group consisted of my older brother. There was no neighborhood group, as we were geographically isolated.

My first conflict came when I entered school. The other children talked with a different accent, and never said "ma'am" or "sir" when speaking to someone in authority. They swore and contradicted the teacher. They had never been to church and ridiculed those who did go. My brother and I wondered why we were different. We had no standard by which to judge our new friends except our own. The integrity of our own standards was fast becoming a matter of doubt to us, under the criticism of the strong out-group. We developed a feeling of inferiority but compensated for it to some extent by changing our accent to conform to that of the group into which we desired acceptance. We consciously tried to adopt the folkways peculiar to those of the new group. In time I became known as a bright pupil and excelled in games and running. Perhaps this was a form of compensation for my feeling of inferiority caused by my peculiarity in the eyes of the new group but, if so, it was quite unconscious as far as I was concerned. With this role established, my sense of competition grew to be very keen and, in fact, my whole personality developed on the basis of competition. When other children were not present, there was always my brother to overcome. Although I was often successful in this competition, no superiority complex developed. The praise of my high grades, speed in running, adeptness at games, and spirited disposition served only as compensation for my feeling of inferiority resulting from the knowledge that I was not like the other children. Again and again the question arose in my mind as to whether they or I were peculiar.

A difficult period of adjustment due to the breaking away from primary-group control began when I entered high school. I encountered such a bewildering mass of new situations and experiences that my inferiority complex, carried over from early childhood, steadily became worse. Because of the cultural background of my family I could associate with only a very select group in the school. Morality was the chief standard for selection. Invitations had to be refused because someone's father drank excessively or because his sister was "wild." I would not rebel directly. My respect for authority was much too well integrated for that. But nevertheless, I resented the fact that my parents wanted to control my activities. I was beginning to accept more and more the patterns of the culture of my companions, who represented the out-group, and cast aside those of my family group.

At one point the conflict between the family pattern and the pattern of the school group became so great that I broke under the strain for a period of almost two years. I was a partial invalid because of heart trouble.

After high school I entered college in a town some distance from my home. With increasing experience in the out-group, the people at home seemed changed as I returned home for visits. They appeared narrow and unsympathetic. The facts were they were the same as they had always been, but the standards by which I judged them had changed. I had adopted the standards of my new society.

MECHANISMS OF ADJUSTMENT

In the preceding section it has been implied that problems of personality conflict are more or less universal among adolescents as they increase the scope of social participation in a complex society. Conflict may be resolved by various devices, some of which have appeared in the preceding case history.

Some of the common mechanisms of adjustment may be considered.

Compensation. In our competitive society compensation is a common adjustment device. In situations where the adolescent fails to measure up to the achievement of others, he has three alternatives: (1) to accept defeat passively and philosophically; (2) to compensate by acquiring the skill necessary to compete successfully; or (3) to compensate vicariously through the development of supremacy in some other field of behavior so that he will receive ego satisfaction by excellence in the substitute field. The first kind of compensation listed is usually referred to as compensation in kind. Vicarious compensation is illustrated in the experience of the youth with a physical handicap, or one who is physically awkward, who achieves excellence in scholarship, some skill, social activities, or some other competitive situation.

Compensation often leads to overreaction and, therefore, to the person's pouring supreme energy into certain lines of achievement in order to gain recognition.

It is said that Demosthenes, the great Greek orator, suffered from an impediment of speech; nonetheless, he wished to be an orator because that was a line of supreme distinction in the culture of his day. He is said to have put pebbles in his mouth and practiced orating by the seashore, competing with the sound of the sea to overcome his handicap. Lord Byron, socially handicapped by a clubfoot, developed the social graces, including dancing.

Sometimes the adolescent, however, compensates in a way that gets attention but fails to bring distinction. One college youth who failed at the end of the first semester and was dropped from school, on returning to school a few years later, made successful adjustments and explained his failure of the early period by the fact that when he found studies difficult he took to violating college regulations as a means of achieving recognition among his peers. He developed outlaw mannerisms and an insolent, egotistical exterior to cover his bruised pride for scholastic failure. He found this device of compensation quite satisfying, but in the end it cost him his opportunity to remain in college.

Evasion. A common adjustment mechanism is to evade taking a stand that would involve one in conflict. Some people employ evasion and avoidance as the major adjustment device during adolescence and carry it over into adulthood. Their whole philosophy is to avoid all kinds of trouble, never to make an issue, but to accept passively any situations in which they are thrust and avoid coming to direct grips with their problems.

The development of evasion as an adjustment device is illustrated in the following case of a college boy who analyzes his past:

> When I was about five, I made my first contacts outside the family upon my entering school. The only language that I could handle fluently was the Swedish that I had learned from my mother and grandparents. This added greatly to my bewilderment upon being introduced to the requirements of the schoolteacher. For the first time I met a world of competition. My parents forbade me to fight. I never disobeyed any of father's commands as his anger was terrifying. I needed only to think of his beating the horses when they had excited his wrath to feel cold shivers run up and down my spine. This check on my natural defense was no doubt well meant and might have been excellent had I received training in avoiding conflicts. But I knew of no way of sidetracking issues then, and the result was for me to retire always. This and other conflicting behavior patterns made me dislike school from the start. My lack of experience in group play made for an inferiority complex and social isolation. Avoiding conflict situations has become a habit.

Evasion may take the form of lying to protect oneself. An element of deception is often present, either self-deception or deceiving others in order to avoid coming to grips with an issue or to avoid facing the consequences of one's acts.

The following account suggests the way such lying as a device of evasion may become habitual:

> It was in grade school that I discovered the effectiveness of evading conflict through lying. Not that I had not lied before, but I had never been very successful about it, and as my father never dealt easily with us boys, we knew it would be better to tell the truth and take the consequences than to have him catch us telling a lie, and getting that much more. I found out that it was different at school. One boy in particular I disliked. He was larger than I so I used to do all sorts of things to "get even" with him. I would go out to the school barn when nobody was around and turn his horse loose so it would go home and he would have to walk home, or I would steal the oats from his horse and give them to my pony. One day I threw an apple core and hit him in the face. He got mad and as I was always ready to fight, we had a good fight and I managed to lick him. The teacher came out to see why we were fighting, and in order to avoid getting punished by her, I told her that he had been swearing and saying filthy things to my sister and that I had heard him and was trying to make him apologize. Instead of getting punished she commended me for it and punished him. He maintained his innocence, but she thought he was the one who was lying. From that time on I resorted to lying whenever I thought that I would benefit by it. I used to have my story all made up before I would do certain things, and most of the time I got by with it. It was the beginning of the formation of a very serious habit which I have had great difficulty in overcoming.

Escape. This mechanism consists essentially of running away from troublesome situations either in reality or in imagination. Daydreaming is frequently used as an escape device of the adolescent. Not being able to master fully the conflicts of his actual world, he escapes in the make-believe situations of fiction or drama or plays the role of hero in Superman or in the movie plot. Some use drink as an escape device. A college girl comments:

> I used to indulge in fantasy thinking to a much greater extent than I do today. When I was in high school I often took a trip around the world during my study period—romance, adventure, and all the trimmings included; however, I am outgrowing the habit of daydreaming to some extent. I just haven't the time to take a quick trip to Hawaii or Mexico when term papers are crying to be done and workbooks sit around staring me in the face.

Often provoking circumstances of a severe nature explain the resort to fantasy, as the following case shows:

> During adolescence I acquired a very bad complexion; it caused me to feel inferior and self-conscious. My brothers quite frequently made mention of my so-called handicap in very tactless and often mean ways. Upon these occasions I nearly always lost my self-control, and left the room crying to retreat to some of my animal friends who could give me nothing but sympathetic looks. On many of these occasions I resorted to a form of fantasy thinking; sometimes I thought of the story of Cinderella, and comparing myself to her, I anxiously awaited the day when my hero would come and I would be transfigured into a lovely princess.

The ultimate escape device, of course, is suicide, which is sometimes used as a way out by the adolescent, but in numerous cases considered with a greater or less degree of seriousness as he bumps up against the bewildering complications of his new social roles and painful embarrassments of awkward new social ventures or struggles with feelings of guilt where he had fallen short of what he or his group expects of him. Often this escape impulse is accompanied by a desire for vengeance on the authorities that have provoked the desire. He thinks of suicide in terms of the remorse it will cause the parent or other adult whose galling restrictions have made him temporarily despise his lot in life.

The following case history of a girl illustrates the use of both escape and fantasy in adjusting to an unwanted situation:

> Shortly after entering high school, an incident occurred which I feel has had more to do with the changing of my personality than any other. I was sick for a long time and the illness left me with a much weakened heart. The specialist prescribed two years of complete relaxation with no stimulus that would increase my pulse. I was stunned by his decision. This deprived me of every vestige of the role I had always played. There was no way out of it for me as the doctor put probable death as the penalty on my failure to do what he said.
>
> My role had been changed from the one I desired to one I had always held in contempt. I could go to school but could not walk more than the width of a room at one time, could not climb stairs, could not sing, dance, or even allow myself to become angry or exceedingly happy. I had to begin to rebuild my whole set of attitudes, habits, and responses along entirely different lines. I could not allow myself to think of the time beyond those two years.
>
> The only outlet for my energy was in mental activity. At first it was misery but I soon learned to drift off into the world of fantasy and wishful thinking

> and there found relaxation and some pleasure. Since I could not carry on my desirable role, I determined to succeed brilliantly where I could. In this way I sublimated my former role and exerted all my energy on mental activities. My mind was very active and sometimes I would appear almost idiotic in the farfetched situations I could imagine.
>
> During this period I learned emotional control and mental control as I had never known it before. Consciously I would not even admit to myself that this new role was not the very one I wished to play. Yet subconsciously I despised the mere mention of grades, dignity, mental excellence, books, and any other thing which I associated with this new role.
>
> When the barriers were lifted and I was told to do what I pleased, I found to my surprise that the desires I had formerly had and which I thought were present all the time were not there any more. I could not excel in the things I once did so well. I did not enjoy physical competition. During my illness I had learned to live alone and enjoy it. I could almost control my emotions at will. Once again I was faced with the problem of adjusting myself to society. What way will I take this time? I have no idea, for as yet I have continued to follow the pattern of what I thought at the time were two horrible years.

Rationalization. Rationalization is a defense mechanism by which one satisfies himself with good reasons rather than real ones. By it one justifies himself for conduct or situations or conflicts that trouble his conscience or his emotional life. It strengthens one's position in his own eyes. Accompanying it often is a tendency to blame or criticize others, the essential psychological result being the strengthening of one's own ego, for one gains a feeling of superiority in being able to lower the status of others in one's own or another's estimation.

Almost everyone has to resort to rationalization in an attempt to bolster his ego in our competitive society where everyone is so often on the losing side.

A student comments concerning her gift at rationalization:

> I also possess a lovely gift of rationalization. I have never yet done a wrong thing without a good reason for it. If I am too lazy to study, I go to bed because I know my health is more important than mere grades.
>
> When it comes to religion, rationalization again makes its appearance. Up until I was about fourteen years old, I attended Sunday school faithfully, but I have attended church very irregularly since then. I do, however, believe in God and have my own little set of rules set up whereby He will look after my soul even though I don't attend church, just so long as I live a Christian life. I must admit that this bit of rationalization gives me a twinge of conscience now and then.

Frank Acknowledgment. Frank acknowledgment of conflict situations and an attempt to come to grips with the fundamental issues involved is the most wholesome method of meeting conflict. Probably no individual, however, develops through the period of adolescence and youth without having employed all the devices of adjustment mentioned above. His temperament and other basic traits of personality, and the kinds of circumstances he has to deal with in the environment, will determine in large part which of these mechanisms will prove to be the major device for adjustment in his particular case. With age and experience he learns to participate selectively in the kinds of social situations that he finds compatible with his standards and ideals and thus avoids conflicts.

THE PRICE OF FAILURE

Failure to achieve success along the lines required for gaining status in our culture leads to the development of a sense of inferiority, commonly referred to as the inferiority complex.

Although there is no doubt a great deal of truth to Adler's view that an inferiority complex often tends to force a person to channelize his activities and achieve superior development of his talents along lines that tend to bring him recognition and supreme success, this solution depends on the individual's being able to find a way of successful compensation. Some individuals are defeated by inferiority; others engage in nonproductive forms of compensation—pretending, bragging, daydreaming—or the development of invalidism to gain attention, for example.

Almost universally adolescents seem to suffer from inferiority feelings—at least the experience is often mentioned by college freshmen who are asked to write their autobiographies. It would be surprising if they did not experience inferiority, if one considers that inferiority grows out of unfavorable social comparisons and that youth are competing in many new situations where they may not show up too well. It is expected that they will suffer from feelings of inferiority until they gradually become adjusted to their particular groove in society and narrow down their participation to those groups and activities in which they can function reasonably effectively. Those who do not ultimately find such an adjustment go through life feeling intense inferiority.

If we conceive of the *social role* as the kind of activity in which the individual participates and of his *social status* as the rank he holds in the social group, it becomes obvious immediately that one's social status is closely related to his social roles. In our culture the prestige that the individual holds is determined to quite an extent by his occupational role, although his role in informal types of social participation is certainly of vital importance.

Obviously, in no society can all individuals play those roles which bring the greatest prestige; in fact, the greatest prestige in any social situation is reserved for a comparatively small number. The important thing from the standpoint of the adjustment is that society makes it possible for each to conceive of his role as being important.

It is an interesting fact that many an adolescent who plays fairly successful roles senses inferiority because he does not conceive of his role as being important.[1] A girl may lead her college class and hold its respect and yet feel inferior because the mother keeps holding before her standards of perfection. The girl, if she accepts her mother's conception of her role, is still a failure and will be even after she makes Phi Beta Kappa.

Unfortunately, in our culture adolescents and youth frequently get the impression (in part because of the reflection of adult opinion, in part because of reflection by the school of certain spurious values, in part because the peer group itself develops spurious values that are transitory in the life cycle of the individual) that certain values are much more important than they are in reality.

For example, because of the great prestige of people with wealth, many get the idea that they can never have high social status or play an influential role in society without the acquisition of great wealth. To the extent that this attitude becomes predominant, the adolescent or youth is likely to experience frustration temporarily or permanently, since most children come to maturity in homes of modest circumstances.

The average adolescent, if he could only know that everyone else of his peer group is experiencing problems that are in many respects similar to his own, that they feel the same sense of inferiority, would feel much less troubled and much less alone than he ordinarily does. It is a step toward maturity when one comes to realize that he is not as different from other people as he thought he was. He then comes to accept the roles he can play and lets others do the same. Such attitudes are the essence of maturity.

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[1] For a statement of the importance of one's conception of his social role, see E. B. Reuter, "The Sociology of Adolescence," *American Journal of Sociology,* 43:414–427, November, 1937.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. What do we mean when we say an individual has more than one social self? How are these social selves developed?
2. Show how social selves may be in conflict.
3. Explain the relationship of conflicting social selves to a guilty conscience.
4. How may limiting one's range of social participation reduce personality conflict?
5. Describe the conflict of the family social self and the school social self in the case study.
6. List the common mechanisms used to reduce mental conflict.
7. Show how compensation may aid one in bringing about better social adjustment. Does compensation among adolescents always lead to better adjustment?
8. Describe ways in which evasion or avoidance is employed as a mechanism of adjustment.
9. Cite common methods of escape.
10. Explain how rationalization is employed as a method of reducing mental conflict.
11. What is the most ideal method of meeting conflict situations?
12. Explain the origin of the inferiority complex. Why is it a common experience of adolescence and youth in our society?

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PART TWO

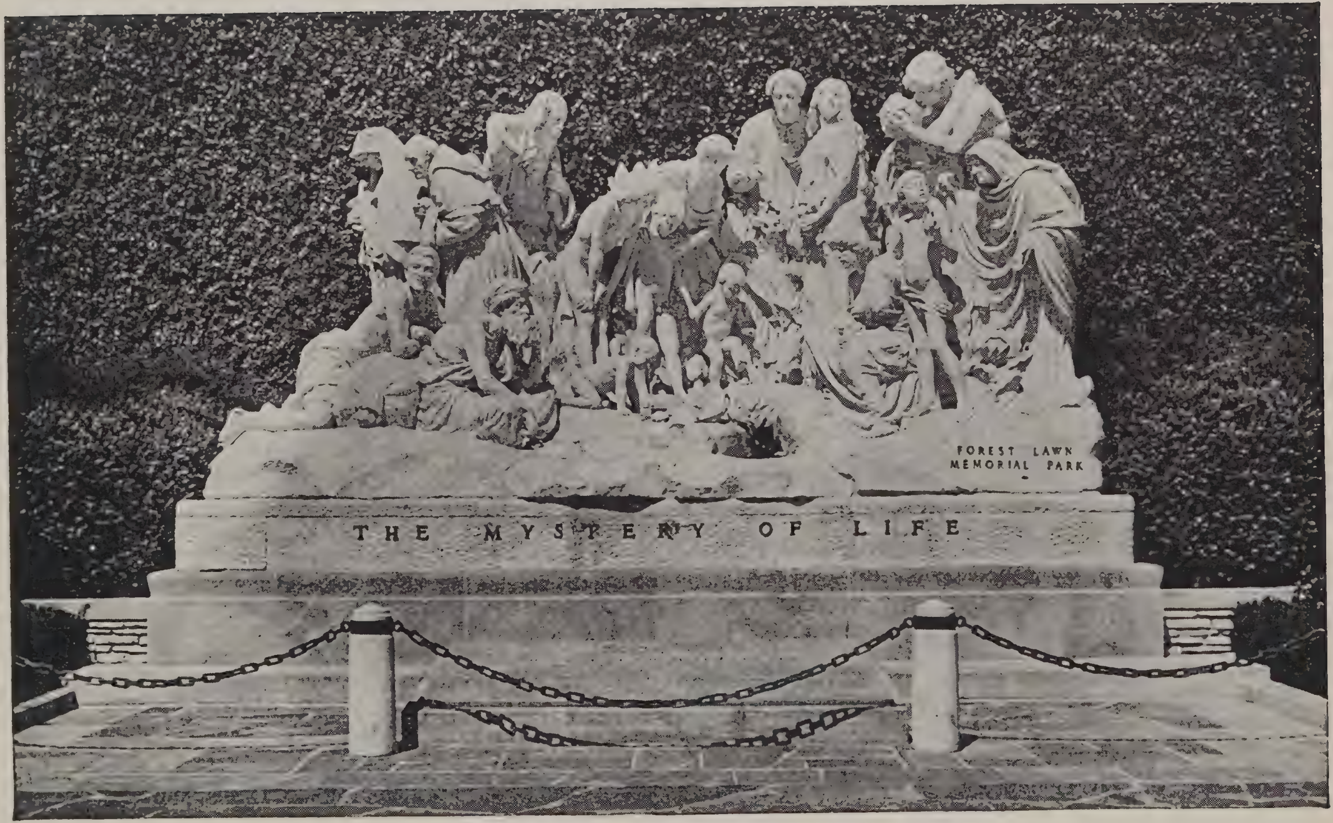
Attaining Moral Maturity

Born without morals and the niceties of manners, man is the only creature who is concerned about the consequences of conduct; human groups, the only groups with a consciously planned social order. The child is immune to many restrictions imposed on adults; adolescents and youths are harnessed with these restrictions and obligations. The processes by which the nonconforming child becomes the conforming adult, the rebel, the accepted citizen, are important ones. Important, also, are the processes that make of the child the moral failure, the delinquent adolescent, and criminal adult.

The path to moral maturity in a complex society is not always clearly marked, the goal not easily reached, but at every stage in life men must submit to authority or be outside the association of civilized men.

Home, church, and school must awake more fully to the realization that adolescent-youths' only guide in moral decision is that which is given them by the social institutions which have their custody. Failure is chargeable to supervising institutions, not to obstreperous forces within the young—vicious tendencies, atavistic appetites, or satanic inspiration. Without having first given young people guides, standards, and precepts, adults have no right to blame them for losing their way.

Adolescence and youth must be given the right of moral decision in an individualistic society, where changing technology creates new moral situations. But so much greater becomes the obligation of parents, religious leaders, and teachers to see clearly the great moral principles embodied in respect for authority, reverence, obligation to others, responsibility for one's own physical well-being, and to teach them by precept and example.


FOREST LAWN
MEMORIAL PARK
THE MYSTERY OF LIFE

"The Mystery of Life" by Ernesto Gazzeri, in Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Glendale, Calif.

CHAPTER 8

Elements in the Problem of Attaining Moral Maturity

THE PROBLEM

In this discussion moral maturity is considered not in the narrow sense but rather in the sense of the child's reaching a point in his development at which he conforms to social regulations and responds to society's control devices as an adult must do. If he makes this transition from childhood to adulthood, he becomes the responsible person—the respected, law-abiding citizen; if he fails, he becomes the delinquent, criminal, misfit, neurotic, or rebellious individual.

The child is immune to many adult restrictions on conduct and requirements of adult morality. The adolescent gradually grows into the period during which he is no longer immune to these requirements, although they are placed upon him only gradually. The tendency of our society, for example, has been to lengthen the period of exemption from the more rigorous penalties for the violation of adult mores and legal codes. No longer do we condemn the twelve-year-old as a criminal; even the sixteen-year-old has certain immunities from the law and its penalties. It is not until eighteen or so that most states consider the juvenile an adult before the law and fully subject to all of its penalties.

This process of growing up morally is twofold. On the one hand is the social expectation that the child will become self-regulated; on the other are the growing experience and knowledge of the child himself which lead to his making more exacting demands upon himself.

> Like those about him, he is making fewer allowances for himself. Even more than they, he expects himself to develop toward a way of life respected for adults. As he thus assumes increasing personal responsibility for his conduct, he

meets directly many challenges experienced only indirectly or partially in childhood.[1]

Morality in its broader sense assumes such a degree of similarity in the essentials of behavior as to make possible an orderly and harmonious social order. This similarity in behavior must either (1) be provided by inborn mechanisms that make the moral act inevitable, or (2) be provided by pedagogical devices that assure a uniformity of teaching throughout the group, or (3) be a combination of inborn and acquired patterns.

If acquired patterns are responsible for social order, well-understood patterns must be sufficiently widely taught to make for an orderly, regulated group life.

THE NATURE OF MORAL MECHANISMS

The Moral Sense. The still, small voice of conscience, as has been pointed out by sociologists and others, proves, on final analysis, to be the voice of the herd. Conscience, viewed pedagogically, is a matter of training.

After his conversion to Christianity, the great apostle Paul testified that his prior persecution of the Christians, which involved imprisonment and even death, was carried out in "all good conscience." What Paul meant was that this was done in all good Jewish conscience. Once the light of Christian teachings revolutionized his perspective and system of values, he operated under the sway of a new conscience; his sense of guilt and of right and wrong was motivated by a new understanding of man's responsibilities and relations.

Anthropological literature is full of evidence suggesting that moral sense is a product of group training. The strongest evidence is that not a single vice that we condemn lacks approval in some civilization. The killing of one's parents when they reach a certain age has been considered a moral obligation in many primitive cultures. Infanticide, that is, the killing of one's own children, has also been considered a social duty, the highest kind of action under certain prescribed conditions. Under prescribed social conditions, suicide is a requirement to keep face. Prostitution has also been a part of sacred rite.

One might go on to elaborate examples illustrating how practices which are subject to the most extreme condemnation by our mores have been considered matters of right and duty under the mores of other cultures. Conscience, moral sense if you will, always operates within the framework of a system of social values.

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[1] Caroline B. Zachry, *Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence,* p. 166, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1940.

The golden rule probably has as universal an application as any principle of social relationships that could possibly be enunciated. Yet, most peoples have considered it proper as a standard for social relationships only when dealing with the "in-group"; that is, a different code was presumed desirable in dealing with the "out-group."

The problem of moral training, therefore, is a problem of developing in youth a high regard for mores of our culture which are considered essential to successful living within the framework of our own social definitions. The development of a proper regard for this framework of social tradition is the essence of conscience building. It is fundamentally an educative process. It modifies the individual from within, making external restraints unnecessary.

Those who fail properly to absorb the standards of the group have to be handled by compulsive devices of law and punishment. In any group there are those who fail to respond to the formal and informal educational processes which every society has found necessary to employ. The ratio of these misfits depends on the effectiveness of the system of moral teaching. A sense of conviction and guilt of conscience are felt only by those who know precisely what is expected of them.

The Development of the Moral Sense in a Generation That Challenges Tradition. The development of a keen moral sense, conscience if we prefer to call it that, is, first of all, the responsibility of the home and of parents. There is no atmosphere like that of the intimate fireside through which the finer traditions, the essential codes of the race, may be transmitted and deeply implanted in the child. In this informal setting, where regard for parents lends an emotional tone to the teaching process, moral lessons become a part of the essential social fiber of the individual. In this climate conditioning is most effective and most enduring.

In stable rural cultures, supplementing the processes of formal teaching of the family has been the universal acceptance by the community of the same ethical values. No conflict was introduced into the teaching system. In a complex society, however, most parents at best are able to deal only ineffectively with a great variety of situations which will constitute the experience of the child. In such a world the development of a moral sense is a more continuous process because new situations have to be constantly defined as the adolescent and youth in their growth and development expand their experiences beyond the circles of which the family and immediate neighborhood are aware.

In this kind of society the school must take over the problem of developing the moral sense and include the broader social situations which characterize life in a society of secondary groups. This can best be done, not by the direct teaching of precept alone, but by making the student aware of the way his behavior affects other people and in turn reflects upon himself.

In the school it is essential that a rational rather than traditional emphasis characterize moral teaching. The justification for traditional morality must be given in rational terms to be most effective in motivating the behavior of youth.

The monogamous family is deeply ingrained in the American mores, as is the idea of premarital sex purity. It is a part of our traditional system, but modern youth cannot be made to regard it if it is presented simply as a traditional system. The values of monogamous marriage must be made clear. Youth must be made aware of the fact that through monogamous marriage and a conscientious regard for pair marriage relationships, the highest personal satisfactions and the greatest social good are to be realized. Under another system of social institutions this might not be true, but they will live under our system of social institutions and will be more happily adjusted to life if they have regard for the traditions about which it is built.

Similar rational justification for all morality would seem to be the proper approach once youth have reached the age of high school and college. Religious sanction, of course, adds to the impelling force of the moral sense, but it would seem that even here an increasing proportion of youth must have their religious faith bolstered by the support of rational understanding.

Viewed from any angle, the problem is not easy in an age when authority has been discarded, as Plant has so clearly pointed out in the following statement:[2]

> When, over a period of but one generation, those bases of authority which have been relied on for centuries are thrown away, the child scarcely knows where he stands. It would all be glib and easy could authority be dispensed with. But there is no point in one's life when one is beyond the possible control of forces that are greater than one's own. These forces may not "choose" to exert themselves but they are there and they are sensed by the child (or adult). If the symbol of position is discarded as a validator of this authority, some

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[2] James S. Plant, *Personality and the Culture Pattern,* p. 181, Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, New York, 1937.

other symbol must be erected. Without that we fail to prepare the child for a life that is real.

THE NEW PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH TO PATTERNS OF CONDUCT

The older view of instinct as the mechanism by which nature provided the human being with elaborate patterns of behavior is long outmoded. It is now recognized that patterns of behavior for the most part are group-inspired. Conduct is rigidly supervised at all times by an alert group of elders who have more or less clearly in mind the end product desired. The end product desired, as well as the degree of vigilance of the adult group, varies tremendously with different social settings, but in all cases the child and adolescent are susceptible to these adult values and to the pressures society applies to see that conduct conforms to them and is practiced by the younger generation. This, in fact, is the essence of the process of moral training as far as its motivation and direction are concerned.

Group norms become the standard by which all conduct is measured. In all societies there are certain over-all general norms of conduct which are accepted throughout the total national group. Other group norms are more local and less fundamental. Still others are confined to neighborhoods or even to families. Every individual's conduct in the end is a product of the way he sorts out and accepts or rejects these various group norms. His standards and values, in fact, come to reflect in adulthood the groups which he has accepted or rejected, since harmony within oneself is attainable only as one achieves some harmony in group associations which are meaningful to him.

Reputation is an important factor in the development of norms of conduct. Reputation is achieved by behaving consistently according to a certain pattern within a given group. By reputation is meant essentially what the group expects of one in the way of behavior, but in turn the group's expectation of behavior, or reputation, is a product of the way one has behaved over a period of time before this particular group. This important fundamental fact must always be borne in mind in handling the adolescent at an impressionable age when he wishes to appear well before his peer group and his elders.

Charles H. Cooley, noted sociologist, in interpreting this situation, developed the term "looking-glass self."[3] He indicated that each of us rates himself by the reflection he has of himself in the attitudes of various groups where he associates, stressing the fact that we have no other way of rating ourselves except as we see ourselves rated by groups in which we participate. The boy who in the schoolroom or Sunday school is rated by his elders or his peers as the worst boy in school sees this social image of himself reflected and likely as not tries to live up to this reputation. Similarly, the leader lives in a social environment where respect is reflected to him by his elders, admiration by his peers. He behaves consistently with this "looking-glass self" picture and accepts the reputation of integrity, responsibility, and leadership.

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[3] *Human Nature and the Social Order,* Chap. 5, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1922.

In the schoolroom teachers have a great deal to do, first of all, with the establishment of the kinds of values which the peer group will accept and, second, in trying to build up in all youth by expression of confidence and respect a "looking-glass self" picture which will be favorable. Too often the teacher, becoming involved in the problems of subject matter and discipline, fails to conceive the more fundamental objectives of helping youth acquire the kind of confidence and self-assurance that will lead them to expect great and good things of themselves. An appreciation of the fact that group reflections become the basis for the most powerful of inner drives, in fact, the most significant forces in motivating the individual, will help to change this situation.

It has been made clear throughout this section that moral sense and social control are a product, not of an inborn sense of propriety, but of social experience and social standards. It follows that the difficulties of attaining moral maturity in a society will depend on the clarity of social standards and the degree of their complete acceptance. If standards are in conflict, individuals must choose between them.

In rigidly restricted social groups where homogeneous standards are accepted by his peers, the adolescent needs to make very few decisions as he approaches maturity. He tends to glide naturally and more or less unconsciously into the neighborhood and family pattern, which is accepted by the only sociocultural environment he knows. This increases his sense of security and reduces personal frictions. He knows what to expect of all his social groups, including that of his peers. Freedom of choice is limited by the restrictiveness of the environment itself, but conflict is also reduced because of the homogeneity of the situation.

This represents a rather ideal condition from the standpoint of youth's approaching maturity with the greatest amount of ease and personal integration, and there is probably no objection to this type of development, provided the individual is to spend the rest of his life in the homogeneous culture of his childhood.

Historically, there is much to be said for this kind of social environment; however, in a mobile age there is little likelihood that even the youth in the most isolated local environment will continue to function within this narrow local group. Sooner or later he will have to make the transition to some outside group, and when he does so, he is likely to find that many local patterns, which have become the key points of his personal orientation, are incompatible with the demands of the outside group. It is because of this that the youth who makes the transition from a narrow local group to an outside group faces critical problems of self-decision, suffers a great deal of conflict, and feels ill at ease in most any new group which he encounters. Because of his upbringing he does not know what to expect in the way of behavior patterns, moral standards, or even common matters of etiquette.

At the other extreme is the youth who is in contact with so many local cultures and group patterns during the formative period that he has great difficulty in adopting for himself any system of standards that will provide a core for personal integration. He may become a colorless individual, a puppet in the hands of every group into which he is thrown, and reach maturity without any fixed purposes for life, without any genuine understanding of how to participate selectively in the kind of group activities that will bring to him the satisfactions and success every adult has a right to expect for himself, without, in fact, convictions as to what is for him desirable behavior.

The ideal situation in our time, it would seem, is for youth to grow up somewhere between these two extremes: to have sufficient inflexibility in the family and primary-group pattern so that certain definite values and standards are well marked, and yet to acquire sufficient experience in other groups so that he develops the power of discernment; and a variety of experience which will help him to reflect as an adult those phases of life in which he feels that he should participate in order to realize what for him are the most desirable objectives.

SOCIAL CLASS AND MORAL CHARACTER

Character and reputation are a matter of conforming to group expectations. This realization has grown on us as various studies have produced evidence that standards and values of different social classes vary greatly in our culture. It follows that a person's reputation in one's social class is far different from what it would be in another social class. In small-town communities and in rural areas generally, middle-class standards seem to prevail in the school and in the family. Behavior of all adolescents and youth is appraised in terms of these standards. Generally speaking, the lower classes do not conform to these standards and values, and therefore often obtain a bad reputation.

Havighurst and Taba in their study *Adolescent Character and Personality* conclude that in Prairie City, which they studied, conformity to middle-class standards determined whether or not one had a good reputation.[4] One of the significant findings of the famed Kinsey report, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male,* is the distinct difference in sex habits and attitudes of the upper- and lower-class males and of the educated and uneducated males. Generally speaking, the lower-class adolescents and youth believe in sexual intercourse as the natural outlet for the sex drive. The upper-class male is much more restrained in sex activity and is more inclined to use masturbation as his method of sex release.

Hollingshead in his study *Elmtown's Youth* finds sexual intercourse and sex exploitation of girls by adolescent boys much more common among the lower-class adolescents.[5]

CONCRETE MORAL ISSUES OF CONCERN TO YOUNG PEOPLE

In our day, when conflicting group standards and class values meet in the high school as those of heterogenous backgrounds associate together, young people must find an answer to life's problems or live in confusion. There they face many problems of moral decision. This is indicated by the responses of 5,500 high-school seniors in the state of Washington to a check list of items dealing with morals, ideals, religion, and the future (see Table 4).

As one glances at this table, he sees that youth are concerned with problems of duty, with problems of understanding why others act as they do, with problems of destiny, with their own bad habits and disbeliefs, and with the whole gamut of experience of which human life is made.

[4] Robert J. Havighurst and Hilda Taba, *Adolescent Character and Personality,* Chap. 5, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1949.

[5] August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth,* John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1949.

TABLE 4. *Percentage of* 5,500 *High-school Seniors Who Checked Certain Problems in the Field of Morals, Ideals, and Religion* *

Problems in morals, ideals, and religion	Boys	Girls
Making something of myself	27.2	33.0
Worry about mistakes I've made	14.5	23.3
How to do my best	11.9	18.3
Concerned about life and death	9.7	18.9
What's happening in the world	11.4	16.6
I swear too much	20.8	8.3
Puzzled about religion	13.5	14.4
Worried about some bad habits	16.3	11.3
Understanding things people do	6.9	14.9
Learning how to enjoy life	11.5	10.7
Students cheating in school	8.3	12.6
Having high ideals	8.0	11.6
The morals of my crowd	6.0	11.0
Losing faith in religion	9.6	7.4
Kind of life kids lead	6.2	10.3
Not facing problems squarely	7.8	8.2
Worried about my reputation	7.5	7.3
Prejudice and intolerance	4.8	9.1
About going to church	6.7	6.8
Embarrassed by friends' action	4.7	7.6
Worried about my morals	6.4	4.3
Always alibiing	4.2	3.4
Religion and school conflict	2.7	4.8
Interested in "dirty" stories	5.4	2.0
People are cruel and selfish	2.9	2.2
Getting into trouble a lot	3.4	0.9
Don't believe Bible anymore	2.5	1.0
Not being very honest	1.5	1.4
My cheating in class	1.4	1.4
Unkindness toward my religion	0.4	0.8

* L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems*, The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., January, 1949.

The Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People of January, 1949,[6] took up specific problems of personality morality. The poll found that 38 per cent of teen-agers said they sometimes smoked, but only 24 per cent approved of smoking; 35 per cent said they sometimes drank, but only 11 per cent approved. This study dealt with a nationwide study of high-school teen-agers. A breakdown by sex is shown in Fig. 13.

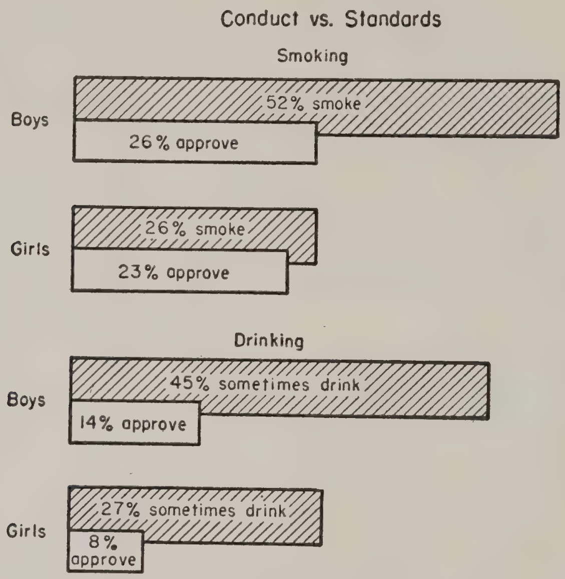

FIG. 13. VIOLATION OF STANDARDS MAY REFLECT PEER-GROUP PRESSURES.

Problems of the troubled conscience center here. (*Based on data from Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People.*)

It would seem that the fact that so high a proportion of youth do things which they do not approve indicates conflict between moral standards and moral behavior. No doubt the difference between what teen-agers believe and what they do reflects peer-group pressure to smoke or drink under certain circumstances.

On the question of cheating, 75 per cent thought that cheating was never justified, 20 per cent thought that it was sometimes justified, and 5 per cent thought that it was often justified. Twelve per cent of the young people thought that everyone cheats.[7]

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[6] H. H. Remmers and Ben Shimberg, Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind., Vol. 8, No. 2, Tables 14 and 17.

[7] *Ibid.*, Table 27.

PERSONALITY TYPES AS A FACTOR IN MORAL MATURITY

The problem of attaining moral maturity is affected not only by the complexity of the culture pattern, with its diverse moral definitions, and by moral definitions prevailing within various social classes, but also by the temperament and disposition of the individual.

Havighurst and Taba summarize the problem of attaining moral maturity for different personality types in the following account:[8]

> Good character (or bad character) may have a very different meaning in the lives of two individuals, when seen in the total configuration of their personalities. Character develops differently in boys and girls of different personality types; it is influenced by a different set of causative factors and by a different set of learning experiences.
>
> One finds, for example, that certain personality types are much more concerned about moral beliefs and principles than are other personality types.
>
> Adaptive Persons take on the beliefs and principles of their social environment readily, without much question and without much inner commitment. They seem to have no moral struggles.
>
> On the other hand, Self-directive Persons are reflective and critical concerning morality. Although their moral behavior may be very similar to that of the Adaptive group, they are characterized by self-doubt and turmoil over the moral choices they must make. They are engaged in the painful process of working out moral principles for themselves.
>
> Submissive Persons, too, are very self-critical concerning their moral behavior, but their doubt springs from a very different source. Unlike Self-directive Persons, they are worried, not by the problem of whether or not they are living up to their own principles and whether or not those principles are the correct ones to follow, but by whether or not they are living up to the expectations of persons who are in authority over them. For Submissive Persons, the question is not "Is this really the *right* thing to do?" but rather "Is this really the thing to do to keep me out of trouble?"
>
> The Unadjusted Persons are confused over moral beliefs and principles. Caught in an environment which fails to reward them sufficiently for good behavior, or which poses moral choices which cause them severe conflicts, they are unable to see a clear and consistent relation between a set of moral beliefs and principles and the feelings of personal satisfaction and social approval which they are striving for.
>
> The Defiant Persons have rejected the generally approved moral beliefs and

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[8] *Op. cit.*, pp. 182–183.

principles. They have not experienced satisfaction and social approval for good behavior to a degree sufficient to learn the beliefs and principles which lie behind good behavior. They are ruled by selfishness and agressive impulses.

HEROES AND MODELS AS TEACHING DEVICES

Youngsters naturally look to elders with prestige for example and guidance; certain individuals are selected as heroes. These heroes become models after whom the adolescent patterns his behavior. Models may be derived from real life, or from literature, biography, romantic fiction, or movies. In the case of children in blighted environments, the hero may be the gangster, the criminal, whoever in the child's social world seems to be the most successful and therefore the object of greatest envy.

In early adolescence when patterns of conduct are being sought, it is a natural experience to resort to models or heroes for pattern. All human beings like to identify themselves with other human beings. It is a common device of escape, a method of daydreaming, exploited universally in fiction, drama, and motion picture. Adolescents and youths take their models more seriously because of limited experience and limited knowledge of biography and history and limited personal contact with people who have attained greatness.

Models have a desirable place as a teaching device and as a device for social control. The great models of history have always been used as a device for inspiring humanity to better efforts. Parents also refer to their ancestors. For many the teacher is a model of unusual influence. At the high-school age some one teacher may do more than any other person to determine the ideals and life objectives of adolescents who are groping so desperately for a way of life that will be satisfactory.

Taylor, commenting on the desire of young people for models worth following, reports the results of a study in which a group of older adolescents were asked to depict some ideal adult. Half of them chose teachers rather than parents.[9]

Only as one looks back in adulthood upon high-school experience does he come to appreciate fully the tremendous influence of some one or more persons who stood before him in a high-school classroom.

Today the motion picture, perhaps unfortunately, has come to furnish the model for many youth, especially for girls. Knowledge of more substantial biography might be for many a much more wholesome influence.

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[9] Katharine Whiteside Taylor, *Do Adolescents Need Parents?* p. 50, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1938.

Hero worship has certain advantages that are rather universal in human psychology. Even as adults we tend to incorporate in the hero all the virtues and greatness of mankind. The hero then becomes not simply an actual figure but a representation of all that is great and good in human experience. Heroes for youth become in this sense desirable ideals, provided characters of the proper kind are presented for hero worship. It is as easy for youth to worship a gambler like Frank Costello and rate his achievements as the greatest of which human beings are capable as it is for them to worship a Lincoln, Ford, Edison, or Shakespeare.

In the teaching of ideals and heroes to youth it is well at all times to temper our idealization of human achievements and of human values with the realistic fact that civilization is in all its aspects composed of "shreds and patches." Every generation carries with it a great deal of useless baggage that has been inherited through tradition. With all human achievements, man is still on the pioneer fringe of invention in the field of material developments and in human relationships.

Not that youth should be made to feel that there are no social values worth maintaining. There are many of them. On the other hand, he should not be discouraged with the feeling that the race has reached perfection, or have held before him an unrealistic picture of human achievements. There is a challenge to him in feeling that much that human beings do could be done better.

It is a certain fact that no society has ever achieved perfection in anything, and no ideal has ever been fully realized by any mortal man.[10]

THE ADOLESCENT-YOUTH DILEMMA

The experience of collecting and reading more than a thousand autobiographies of college students, mostly freshmen, and of watching the course of life on a college campus has developed a conviction that the youth of today has faced more moral alternatives by the time he is twenty years of age than his grandparents faced in a lifetime.

Three influences create conditions that underlie problems of moral choice and make them of preeminent concern in the experience of the adolescent:

1. Movement is so prominent in our society that most young folk leave the neighborhood and family group early in life.

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[10] For an interesting discussion of this topic, see David Seabury, *Growing into Life*, p. 592, Liveright Publishing Corp., New York, 1928.

2. Change has been so rapid in all phases of experience that well-defined moral standards no longer exist; parents are often so uncertain in matters of the rightness and wrongness of specific acts that their teaching of moral precepts often either is neglected or lacks positiveness.

3. In our society many adolescent-youth groups exist in which the codes of the new generation hold sway, there being relatively little chaperonage by adult codes.

Each of these conditions is in a very real sense modern and primarily a product of city life. These three influences—mobility, change, and self-sufficient youth groups—are the external circumstances that bear most directly upon problems of moral choice.

Consider for a moment the position of youth in a static society, where change and movement are practically unknown. Home, play group, neighborhood, church, and school enforce one philosophy of conduct. The youth grows up into a situation in which he fits by virtue of his training. Usually before he encounters the issue of self-regulation he is a mature adult with habits well formed, for he is given little responsibility until his parents have died. Then he becomes the conserver of traditions. This situation has existed among most historic peoples and was typical to a marked extent in our rural society of yesterday; in fact, it is to some extent true in more isolated rural areas today.

But in the more dynamic aspects of our society adolescents during immature years escape the influence of family and neighborhood groups, participate more or less widely in peer groups, and because of their multiple contacts, soon awaken to the fact that there is no one universal code of right by which all men are governed. With breadth of experience they soon learn that right and wrong have come to depend on social norms, club patterns, time, circumstances, place, comfort, and convenience rather than upon established and universally accepted precepts. Although family, gang, neighborhood, community, and club may stand for certain basic moral fundamentals, they often hold such different standards that the youth is confused. Such was the case of the college girl, nineteen years of age, from a broken home, who had shifted from one community to another to live with relatives and who had encountered so many codes that she had none. As a college freshman she wrote:

> I am still wandering around in this maze of conflicting training, wondering what I will be like if I become molded to an acceptable pattern. My life has become without aim, without a goal to work forward to, a little without mean-

> ing. At present I have decided to step back into my shell and out of the conflict of codes and desires and personalities that seem to make up society.

Those who develop under more positive and uniform standards, in stable small-town or rural neighborhoods for example, are likely to experience difficulty in making moral adjustments when they shift from intimate primary groups, thus going out from a regime under which regulation is achieved by the effective "ordering and forbidding" devices of family, neighborhood, and community to a new setting where, because anonymity prevails, they must become to a considerable extent self-regulating or break social codes. Full moral maturity for them comes suddenly and often before they have had sufficient experience to appreciate its full meaning.

For the reason that the transition from primary to secondary groups in our society usually is made during adolescence, this period is one of the most interesting and most critical phases in the moral life of the individual. The young person often finds that primary-group patterns hinder adjustment in the new social relationships. Consider the following interesting case of a family which failed to prepare the child for social experience outside the family group. It is from the autobiography of a college student.

> My mother's family tree spread with four sturdy branches: Quaker, Puritan, Wesleyan, and Boone. If less conforming branches had grown there, they had been carefully pruned. This family, together with some half dozen of their group, held rigid customs which they projected on each succeeding generation. They had three ambitions: to till the soil, to establish homes, to spend eternity in Heaven. My parents were the third generation of these upright pioneers.
>
> Through me, a frail, nervous little girl, they would project their way to life. I would reach perfection; I would be devoutly religious, kind, gentle, soft of voice and manner, a little lower than the angels. I would keep a household running smoothly, be a perfect seamstress, a renowned cook. I would sing and play and drink deeply of the joy of music. I would have a deep and perfect understanding. "As the twig is bent, so is the tree," they reasoned.
>
> Cut off from group contacts as a child, unhappy, living in the past in which my mother lived, I placed my faith in the future, and in my fantasy thinking built the foundation for a future different from the past. Left so often to my own thoughts, I began to question, to reason, to choose. The bonds which held me tightly to my primary-group patterns still held firmly, but I felt that after graduation, when I went out "on my own," they would be severed and I would begin to live under new codes, to have new ideas, attitudes, and habits, which would make me a part of the society about me. Strange, illogical reasoning to believe that bands so carefully tempered through the years would snap so easily!

> I entered college mentally and physically exhausted. During the period of rest necessary to rebuild my body, I cut loose from the old inhibitions and began to give expression to long-suppressed desires. Habits were difficult to break, but I found it could be done.
>
> Here I must leave my analysis. With new stimuli, fewer taboos, more opportunity for borrowing new patterns, I will no doubt form new habits, but, from the experience of recent years, it seems safe to conclude that I will never break entirely from the training of my childhood.
>
> From a study of my development, we may conclude that a personality may be shaped chiefly by the customs of a small group if that group is isolated by physical or taboo barriers, and that when this happens socialization in a larger group is difficult; that projection of the culture of an intimate "in-group" upon the child can be so effective as to practically eliminate the influence of "out-group" patterns and to make difficult the attainment of status in normal "out-group" life.

Although the adjustment problems faced by this girl in her shift from a primary to secondary group are more extreme than most youth encounter, the experience of transferring from the primary group to the "cold" world beyond is often one of moral crisis. The new freedom which automatically comes with getting into a social situation, and which makes necessary the discarding of certain values acquired in the primary group and no longer considered appropriate, begins a mental process of debunking which may find no convenient limits; for once a person starts throwing off inhibitions, he may go the whole way and degenerate, becoming a misfit in both his primary and his secondary groups.

One sees in college students, as they pass from the freshman to the senior year, a progressive tendency to cast aside established principles and previously accepted authoritative guides to conduct. This is a normal result of the liberating effect of college on the individual and brings with it that healthy zest which comes with conscious rebellion. The experience proves disastrous for some and results in a degree of personality disorganization. The majority, who discard only those values which were peculiar to their primary groups but hardly consistent with the values of the larger society, find college life broadening in the proper sense. They achieve new liberties but at the same time keep their trend of personality development in line with established habits and with the general moral norms of the larger society.

If one takes a long view of history, it must be noted that it has been unusual for youth to shift fairly early in life from constant supervision of adults to relatively independent participation in a youth group as they do today. A relaxation of social pressures of the elders in the family and among the kin results, and pressure devices of the youth group are intensified.

A college freshman traces this transition in focal point of social control. For a time the family controlled, then the peer group.

> What controls me? I have always been independent-minded; however, I have quite definite ideas of right and wrong. These are traditional in my family circle and I naturally adhere to them. I have no particular fear of the disapproval of either of my parents, but I am happier if I please them. This is only natural, because it is extremely unpleasant to have friction in the home. This family control was very strong when I was a small child. In fact, I can well say it was my only control. . . .
>
> As I have grown older, however, family control has become weaker every year. I no longer fear or respect my parents' wishes very much—I tolerantly humor them. Unless it is something I definitely do not want to do, I obey their wishes just to keep peace in the family. While I am living away from home, the control of my friends is substituted for my family control. I want my actions to meet with the approval of my friends.

Adult standards are often contradictory in our society, but youth codes are even more so. The conservative-minded youth must shrewdly steer his course largely in the light of his own experience in the youth group, for usually his parents have little appreciation of actual problems he encounters. Below is an account by a college girl which illustrates not only the problem involved but also her chosen course of action in relation to special issues. She refuses to participate in certain practices of the youth group, she avoids some youth-group situations, and she has established a reputation for personal adherence to selected lines of conduct.

> Sometimes I wonder if it pays to behave oneself. There are naturally times when I do, and then again there are times when I don't.
>
> I have my own code of morals, somewhat affected by my parents' views, but on the whole established by myself.
>
> For instance, I don't smoke. I have been both complimented and embarrassed for that. Since most every girl I run around with smokes, and that excessively, they kid me, although for some reason, I feel that some of them at least admire me for refraining from it. Why do I? Well, first of all, it is too expensive, and it doesn't help one's health whatsoever; in fact, I hear it is most detrimental. Then, too, most every girl who so indulges is doing it only to show off and be smart. In my opinion, it lowers her to a great extent. And I feel well rewarded for my abstinence when the boys who are worth while

> appreciate the fact that I don't smoke. It is not only the boys, but middle-aged people; people who know and who have been around, who congratulate me for being so wise.
>
> Once in a while when I'm out with a crowd of kids who are in the mood for drinking, I am rather puzzled as to what to do. If I refuse, they think I'm a prig and a wet blanket; if I do it, it hurts me because I hate the stuff and I know it isn't doing me any good. When I'm tired and the evening is dull, a glass of wine does wonders, but to go to a café and spend a whole evening in such a wasteful manner is not my idea of a good time.
>
> There is also the boys' side of it. They like to take out a girl who will be sociable and full of fun. If he wants some liquor, then she should be agreeable. But I try to accept dates where I won't be expected to be quite so agreeable.
>
> That also goes for this business of necking and petting. I hate those words; so I'll use one commonly heard in my home town; namely, "checking."
>
> A fellow will see just how far he can go with a girl, and the harder she is to get, the more he likes her. He'll take out the one that is loose and will "check" with any one and every one where no one will see them. But the girl that he is proud to show to his friends and the general public is the other girl, his real girl.

The processes described, which one sees operating among college youth, no doubt could be observed among adolescents in high school and those who leave home in stable communities to obtain work where they encounter new groups with new codes. Both college and noncollege youth with conservative traditions encounter one and the same problem, that of going out from the warm, intimate home group in which people are deeply interested in the way one behaves, and in which all know what is "right," and of entering new impersonal groups where many different definitions of the "right" prevail, and where few care whether or not one conforms.

It is this freedom to choose, this necessity for choice, which change, social complexity, movement, and independence have brought, that makes adolescence an age of moral conflict, a time of emotional turmoil. It is the experience of choosing that makes modern youth mature early both in the ways of crime and of civic duty, of social rebellion and of social morality. Youth in static societies grow naturally and without effort into an acceptance of the ethics of the tribe. In a dynamic society of complex standards they must select from a variety of codes and voluntarily adopt social standards or have none. Because activities have become more complex than social norms, and new social demands more pressing than traditional moral standards, the youth of today must build a synthesis of experience or lack personality integration.

Those interested in character development may well give careful study to external situations encountered by the adolescent and youth of today, for such study will reveal that he must in many situations choose for himself rather than depend upon traditional guides. That he be prepared to do so is necessary. Too close supervision in childhood is, therefore, undesirable, and too rigid instruction in codes which are out of line with conduct that will be essential as social experience enlarges also seems inappropriate. Too restricted a blueprint for behavior is likely to bring revolt if the individual in the normal course of his development faces contradictory but attractive, and what appear to him to be satisfactory, patterns. Rather than have revolt, which always involves the danger of going too far, it is probably better to teach a broader code or to teach that there are different codes and by such frank recognition prepare the youth to make a more intelligent selection.

One certainly should not go so far as to say that children and youths should be left free to choose whatever moral codes they will. Family patterns must involve as strict instruction as do those of any other institution. But often the limits will be more widely drawn by home, neighborhood, school, and church if those in charge look ahead and try to understand the kind of choices youth will have to make.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. What is meant by the term moral maturity as it is used herein?
2. Compare the child and the adolescent with regard to moral immunities.
3. Define conscience as it is used herein. Do you agree with this view?
4. What do we mean when we say conscience "always operates within the framework of a system of social values"?
5. So viewed, where does the responsibility for a "good" conscience rest?
6. Analyze the problem of conscience building in a complex society.
7. Compare the effects of a traditional and a rational emphasis in the moral training of adolescents and youth.
8. From what source does the direction of moral training come?
9. Explain how differences in group norms for conduct may complicate moral training of adolescents and youth.
10. What do we mean by reputation? How does one gain a reputation? How does one's own reputation become a force in regulating his own conduct?
11. Explain the term "looking-glass self." Apply it to the problem of moral training.
12. How may conflicting moral standards of groups produce personal conflict for the adolescent?

13. Contrast adjustment problems centering about questions of morality in a static and in a dynamic society.

14. Cite evidence to show that moral standards differ with the social classes. Which social class tends to determine moral evaluations in most school situations? How does this affect the lower classes?

15. What are some of the concrete moral issues with which teen-agers are concerned?

16. Present evidence to show that there is often a discrepancy between teen-agers' standards and their conduct. Explain this situation.

17. Show how different personality types react to moral standards.

18. Discuss models as a device for moral teaching. What caution should be employed in using heroes as moral patterns for youth?

19. What three general situations in the experience of modern young people force upon them many problems of moral choice?

20. Illustrate how shifting from group to group affects the attainment of moral maturity.

21. Why is the transition from primary to secondary groups especially important?

22. Explain the effect of moral uncertainties of our society on adolescent-youth adjustments in the moral sphere.

23. Show how the self-sufficiency of modern adolescent-youth groups affects moral decision.

24. Why is it important that those who train youth understand the peer-group world of the modern adolescent and youth?

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CHAPTER 9

Adolescents and Youth and the Authority Pattern of the Home

INSTITUTIONAL NORMS OF THE MODERN FAMILY

All social institutions establish norms of conduct or rules for individuals who are participants in them. The primary norms for parents in the American family are (1) affection and (2) authority. For the child they are (1) respect and obedience and (2) the return of affection.

The affectional role of the parent, with the growth of individualism and the increased knowledge of child psychology, has been strengthened at least as an ideal. It has become obvious that abiding affection, especially between mother and child, is the most important single developmental device in the shaping of the personality of the child. Affection gives the child a sense of belonging to group life and confidence in the world he enters. We have already swung to the opposite extreme from the Watsonian behaviorism, which cautioned parents against the dangers to the child of parental emotional involvement. We have even tempered the Freudian fears of emotional fixation as expressed in Oedipus and Electra complexes, realizing now that emotional attachments are dangerous only when they become all-consuming. It is recognized that filial affection is the first essential to the personality development of the child. Lacking this, he is faced with lifelong difficulties of social adjustments.

The second institutional norm, that of authority, while recognized in principle, is being questioned as more democratic practice has crept into parent-child relationships. The extent of parental authority, the length of time over which it should be enforced, and the way in which it should be expressed lack clear definition in the family of today. The accepted philosophy of our grandparents' generation, "Spare the rod and spoil the child," has been questioned so widely that an observing anthropologist has suggested that a two-year-old frequently has his parents buffaloed.[1]

From the standpoint of the child, the lack of clarity in institutional norms has its counterpart. The idea that the child should render affection to parents is still accepted. On the other hand, the obligation is socially approved only when the parent proves himself worthy of affection.

The matter of rendering respect and obedience, too, is dependent on circumstances, especially as the child approaches the period of adolescence and youth. Society recognizes his obligation to obedience only to the extent that the parent is worthy of obedience and exercises a reasonable authority.

In some early societies the penalty for disobedience to parents was death. In authoritarian systems little restraint was put upon parents' authority. The question of whether the parent was right in his exercise of authority or whether his judgment was sound was not raised. In the American family institution not only has severe penalty for disobedience disappeared but even the parents' right to demand unquestioned obedience is challenged, not just by youth themselves but by others in our democratic family system, which also assumes the right of the child to develop in the direction of his interests, proclivities, and abilities.

In many respects his moral right to development is acknowledged as being superior to the parents' right to demand obedience for obedience's sake. Rather than blindly accepting parental authority, as youth of a generation or two ago were inclined to do, and bowing to it unless it became so arbitrary that they were forced to revolt by running away from home, there is now a continuous struggle between parent and child for authority, with the parent more inclined to relax authority as the child grows older and the adolescent or youth more inclined to remain in the home situation and fight it out.

This is not to imply that youths still do not run away from home to escape from authority, but usually when they do so, it is from the kind of home in which the parent assumes the old-fashioned authority role once generally sanctioned by the family institution. The fact remains, however, that in our culture as a whole there is comparatively little support in the mores for persistence of arbitrary authority patterns of parents into the adolescent-youth period. The trend is toward a declining sanction of adult authority in the home and an increasing sanction of youth's freedom.

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[1] Margaret Mead in an address before the American Sociological Society, Chicago, December, 1943.

THE DIFFICULTY OF THE MODERN PARENT'S ROLE

Parents, ignorant and intelligent alike, in a changing society have a most difficult role in training a child for the world in which he is to function. Their problems are different, but, nonetheless, each has his problem.

The poorly educated parent with limited social, geographic, and cultural experience is so bewildered by the greater experience, knowledge, and mobility of his adolescent children that he is prone either to give up in confusion or to apply the same kind of arbitrary discipline employed by his own parents. Likely as not, the adolescent finds his parents' definitions of situations contradictory to those of the peer group and perhaps even to those of the adult group which he meets and with which he works in the school system or in other relationships outside the family.

If the parent gives up entirely, the adolescent is left to make his own decisions in matters of conduct in a confused world which has no set definition of right and wrong, good and bad. In case these parents resort to arbitrary dicta, they are likely to compel the child to revolt. He then either forces his way by defiance or picks his way by evasion.

The more intelligent parent who understands something of the complexity of human experience in an urban society is likely to have few definitions that are arbitrary. His morality is developed to fit situations, to make possible adjustments to particular circumstances. This may be well enough in the sophisticated adult's life but does not give a great deal of comfort to young people who in many specific situations want to know what they should or should not do. One author quotes a daughter as saying: "Mother, it makes me uneasy to know there are so many things even you have not decided about." [2]

> Frequently a most serious element from the adolescent's point of view is that his parents also are groping. For perhaps the first time in history, adolescents and parents alike are facing similar problems in adjusting to a rapidly changing world. The result in many instances is that when the adolescent seeks a steady, guiding hand he finds a wavering one. . . .[3]

The lack of exact definition of situations by parents in contemporary society applies not only to handling problems of morality in the narrow sense,

[2] Katharine Whiteside Taylor, *Do Adolescents Need Parents?* p. 8, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1938.

[3] *Ibid.* Quoted by permission.

that is, sex morality, but also to teaching in the fields of religion, moral integrity, and fundamental principles of honesty and regard for great moral codes of the race such as those embodied in the Ten Commandments.

It is true that each young person must make his own decision in such matters as the person he will marry and the religion he will adopt, but the parent never escapes the obligation of giving the child fundamental tenets by which life can be guided. It is foolish to tell a twelve-year-old to decide all religious issues for himself and thus evade responsibility as the modern parent too often does. It is the parent's obligation at least to outline the great faiths of humanity, what they have accomplished for mankind, to point out the advantages and, if he so sees it, the disadvantages of adherence to religious creed or church membership.

The difficulty with many modern parents who give such categorical instructions as "decide the issue for yourself" is that they have never decided the issue for themselves. They, too, grew up in families which had no standards or accepted guides for conduct. Having grown up in this no man's land, they give their children no standards in spite of the fact that life without definite guideposts has never been fully satisfactory to them.

It is little wonder that church and school have had to assume primary responsibility for defining morality and for establishing life goals for many children and youth. The failure of parents to conceive clearly their responsibility places new obligations on school, Sunday school, church, and such social organizations as the Scouts and 4-H clubs. Failure of the parents at this point, however, is tragic. No adolescent is prepared to take part in a complex society without having had a chance to sense through the intimate relationships of the family some of the deeper values and major aspirations of mankind that have been incorporated in the morality, religious faith, and ideals that have evolved from man's struggle to adjust to life.

Wise indeed is the parent who points out to the adolescent the example of some person, in fiction, biography, the family lineage, or among friends and neighbors, who sacrificed selfish gains for principle, temporary good for more distant goals. Such patterns must ever be held before the young if they are to realize the best of which they are capable, since there is so much in contemporary society to make them feel that immediate gain is a thing to be sought, temporary pleasure regardless of the future price. It is important at all times that parents and teachers keep their moral training on this high level rather than on the level of constant bickering and petty quarreling over nonessential issues. Inspired by high ideals, youth is capable of doing better than the parent generation did, but the ideals do not arise spontaneously; they must be planted. This can be done better by citing examples than by precept.

It is well enough for parents to say, "Don't do as I do, but do as I say," but a parent who resorts to this kind of moral instruction should go one step further and explain how his own failure to live up to these precepts cost him so much or denied him many things which he has wished he could have attained and which he might well have attained had his own training been more wisely directed.

Acknowledgment by the parent of his own failures, the errors in his upbringing, and the price he has paid for his own foolish decisions is a wholesome antidote for the usual perfectionist attitude which the parent assumes regarding his own moral and spiritual excellence.

Without careful teaching, it is difficult for adolescents and young people to see far enough ahead to know the price to be paid for certain misdemeanors that have been tabooed by adult society.

THE PARENT'S DILEMMA

Even though the parent has been robbed of a part of the social sanction in which his right to authority over his children has been grounded, the authority norm still survives and with it the accompanying sense of responsibility. Society has always assumed that if the child failed in attaining normal adult attitudes toward the system of social control and became delinquent or criminal, the parent was to blame. This same sense of blame is still attached to the parent if he fails so to exercise authority as to achieve the desired end.

The emergence of the individualistic family, in which the child is supposed to be given a great deal of liberty, has left many parents in an indecisive state of mind concerning the extent to which authority should be exercised. Too much authority finds no sanction in the social system, at least in urban culture. Yet too little may encourage the child in behavior patterns that are socially condemned, reflect upon the parent as a disciplinarian, and credit him with a "spoiled" child. The authority role of the parent today for this reason may be no less perplexing for him than for the child.

The authority role is also a source of serious marital conflict for parents who cannot agree on the amount of authority to be exercised in the home. The one parent feels that the best interests of the child are served by the exercise of a rigid authority; the other, because of temperament, study of some popular brands of child psychology, or because of having been trained differently himself, believes the child should have almost complete freedom. The more conservative may fear the trend of development he sees in a child under the rein of freedom and be embarrassed by his conduct before others. In more extreme cases, this situation is provocative not only of conflict between parents but also of conflict between child and conservative parent. Even the young child may openly defy the attempts of the more conservative parent to exercise authority.

With all parents, in the adolescent-youth period, which must allow the child to taste the kind of freedom of decision that is the heritage of adults, there is the question of how much freedom to permit. Taylor states a guiding principle which seems worthy: [4] "The limits are set by his degree of maturity as evidenced in social judgment and capacity to accept responsibility."

Parents need always to have in mind some conception of the effect of their system of family discipline on preparing the child to function as an adult. Too little restriction may be a definite handicap to the child as a prospective adult. Margaret Mead has shown how the Manus child in New Guinea, who grows up practically free of restrictions, mourns the coming of adulthood with its restrictions and responsibilities.[5] Adults always look back on childhood as the only happy period in life.

Adulthood is the long age period in life. To fail to prepare the child to take his place there naturally, normally, and happily, to carry his share of responsibility, and to discharge his obligation in maintaining the necessary systems of social control, is shortsighted indeed.

In spite of the widely recognized disintegrating tendencies of the modern family and the challenge to the authority pattern of the home by peer-group associates, the family still is a powerful factor in regulating the behavior of adolescents and young people, probably the most potent influence. The author has been impressed with this fact in asking students to discuss in written papers [6] the factors that are most important in making them do the things they do not wish to do but do from a sense of duty, and influences that restrain them from doing things they would like to do but do not do. In such accounts the strong hand of parents is most evident in the background of the student. Regard for parents' wishes and standards, fear of hurting or disappointing parents, are powerful restraints on behavior. This applies to college students who have already left the family nest for school attendance. It is no doubt much more true of younger adolescents. The strong hand of parents is clear in the accounts of college students assembled by Jameson,[7] also.

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[4] Katharine Whiteside Taylor in Howard Becker and Reuben Hill, *Marriage and the Family,* p. 461, D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1942.

[5] Margaret Mead, *Growing Up in New Guinea,* William Morrow & Company, Inc., New York, 1930.

[6] For a summary of a number of case reports, see Paul H. Landis, *Social Control,* Chaps. 20 and 21, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1939.

AMBIVALENCE TOWARD PARENTAL AUTHORITY

Human beings at any age are a mixture of conflicting motives. Most emotions have their counterpart in a contrary emotion. This play of conflicting emotions is prominent in adolescence because of the peculiar transitional nature of the period. The desire for independence is not an unmixed desire. There is also a desire to revert back at times to the dependent protection of affectionate parents. Among adolescents reversion to baby talk is not at all uncommon. The desire to revolt and be free of all supervision is restrained by a desire to retain the affection of the parent and his approval. Conflicting emotions of love and hate, revolt and submission, ambivalent attitudes, often characterize the relationship of adolescent toward parent.

It should be pointed out that this struggle between submission and authority is not entirely a one-sided affair with the adolescent. The parent, also, struggles between two emotions: one to give freedom, the other to retain his right of control and direction. Most parents like to help push their adolescents and youth into certain realms of adulthood, but being human, they also wish to maintain an infantile dependence so that they will be looked up to for advice, guidance, and decision. The parent role, while it has its unsatisfactory aspects for most people, also has its very satisfactory elements. The growing independence of the youth foreshadows the empty nest, when parent will have lost the child completely as far as supervision is concerned. Most parents dread to see this day arrive and, therefore, are emotionally reluctant to see their adolescents and youth graduate into the full stage of independence. Unfortunately, many parents have never gained sufficient emotional maturity to be able to release them.

The boy who is bound to his mother's apron strings, the daughter who must always remain at home and take care of papa and mama, even after she has attained full physical and mental maturity, are as likely to be a product of abnormal parental attachments as a product of social inadequacies in their own personalities.

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[7] Samuel Haig Jameson, "Adjustment Problems of University Girls because of Parental Patterns," *Sociology and Social Research,* 24:262–271, January-February 1940.

Parents sometimes feel hurt and abused when the adolescent shifts primary attention from them to the gang or to a member of the opposite sex. Some parents try to hinder his loyalties, interests, and devotion to the peer group. In contrast to the parents who find it emotionally difficult to release the child are the numerous parents who magnanimously submerge their own interests in retaining the child's surviving infancy by rationally facing the youth's own problem and pushing him out as quickly as is safe and proper into the responsibilities and freedoms of adulthood.

It is an interesting fact that within the same family the ability of the parents to permit the child to attain maturity may vary. Some parents are able to allow all the children to obtain adulthood except the last. The last child, being the final symbol of the completed family, is encouraged in his dependence, the parents fearing the isolation and loneliness that may come when the last child leaves. In other cases it may not be the youngest child but the child in some other position. Parents, being human, may, in spite of all rationalizations to the contrary, feel a much deeper emotional attachment to one child than to the other. In some cases, these deep attachments of the mother may go back to peculiarities associated with one child's birth or with his or her health in early childhood or infancy. They may root back to periods of crisis in the family in which the emotional attachment of the parent for this particular child became very deep. In such cases the parent may manifest objectivity in letting the other children go but faces a supreme struggle in permitting this one, to whom he is most attached, to acquire adulthood and leave the nest.

TWO SYSTEMS OF FAMILY CONTROL

Cavan, in the White House Conference report,[8] writes that two systems of family control are revealed in narratives obtained from youth. The first is a system based on issuing commands and punishing disobedience. No attempt is made by the parent to give the child an understanding of why rules are established or why he is punished for their violations. Where punishment is severe, the child often develops fear of the parent and resentment. This kind of discipline, she finds, precludes truly confidential relations between parent and child. Under this scheme of control the parent sets himself above the child and establishes formal dictatorial relations. The child seeks his pleasures in groups outside the family. When the boy or girl reaches the middle teens, this kind of control must be relaxed. In the case of boys, it is often brought about by the boy's defying the father when he reaches the age where he has sufficient strength to do so. Scolding and nagging may persist through the later years of adolescence and youth, but it is difficult to substitute any new control for the old system of rules and punishment.

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[8] White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Adolescent in the Family,* pp. 156–157, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1934.

Friction between father and son under such a system of control is well described by a college freshman in a student paper in the author's collection. Throughout all his childhood and early adolescence his father had domineered him and maintained an unreasonably harsh discipline. The summer before the young man left for college the strain reached a climax. The incident given below is simple enough but is significant in that it marks the climax of a long series of frictions which led to the final crisis and required that the two redefine their attitudes toward each other. Rather than come to a final break, as so often happens when the youth asserts his independence, in this instance the father's attitude changed and the two reached a point of man-to-man understanding.

> One day as I was mowing hay, my dad called me in from the field to help him. I tied my team to the hayrake but fastened only one hitch strap to hold them. The flies were bad and when dad and I came back to the mower the horses had jerked around and cracked the tongue. Things hadn't been going so well for dad that day and after taking a look at how the horses were tied, he started bawling me out. I explained in a nice way that I couldn't help that they had cracked the tongue. That made him more sore, and he said, "I'm sick and tired of you. Pack up your clothes and get out of here and stay out."
>
> I was never more angry in my life. "Don't think I won't," I said and started packing up to leave, and he came up to me and apologized—the first time in my life that my dad had ever apologized to me for anything. He felt terrible about it. I explained that I didn't think we could get along, but I said I would stay if he really wanted me to. He said he did.
>
> I told him then that I was coming to college whether he paid a cent of my expenses or not. Time came for school to start and he told me to go to town and get some new clothes. Sunday I wanted to come to school, and he said he would be glad to drive up with me. Just before he left for home that evening, he handed me a checkbook and said, "Write out checks any time you need some money but be kind of careful with it because I don't have so very much." I never felt happier in my life. I had shown my dad that I could amount to something in spite of the fact that I once was the black sheep of the family.

> Today my father has an altogether different attitude toward me. I have established myself with my dad again, and that means a great deal to me.

The second system of control Cavan reports is more flexible.[9] The parent explains to the child why certain behavior is expected. Punishment may be included for violation, but not necessarily so. Where punishment is administered, it does not act as a barrier to the intimacy of the parent and child. In many cases the child is so thoroughly incorporated into the family that sympathy and understanding between parent and child are sufficient control to make punishment unnecessary. The child conforms to their expectations because he has high regard for them and their attitudes. He comes to share their attitudes and to confide in them.

Concluding her observations on these systems of family control, she says:[10]

> . . . the conclusion seems valid that the home which incorporates the child into a unified family circle, with confidential relationships between parents and child, contributes most both to the happiness and to the well-balanced adjustment of the child.

Although these two situations as described probably represent opposite poles between which most families fall, the implications to the contrasting systems of control within the family are far-reaching in importance.

As one views the recent period of American history, it would seem that the so-called "modern" democratic family has tended toward the more favorable extreme, away from the paternalistically dominated family pattern of rural society of a generation or two ago.

Other phases of the White House Conference study cited elsewhere suggest that the urban family of today has approached the more effective system of control, based on sympathy and mutual understanding between parent and child, more fully than has the farm family which still maintains its patriarchal leanings.

This theory of discipline would seem to be in harmony with the more modern approach to the whole problem of morality. The morality that works is that which has become a part of one's system of motivation. A morality imposed by the compulsion of external rules and external authority is effective only when chances for evasion are eliminated.

The obvious difficulty of an arbitrary authority based on absolute domination of parent, often by force, as has been demonstrated so often in the past generations when this pattern was the accepted one, is that there is no way by which it can naturally terminate as the child reaches the period of adolescence and youth. This complete and absolute domination must in time cease. Even the rule of physical force has its limit when the son eventually outgrows his father in physical strength. In numerous cases such an authority pattern ends in an open fight and either causes the youth to be driven from the home by the domineering parent or leads to the youth himself breaking from the home rather than choosing between submission and open conflict.

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[9] *Loc. cit.*

[10] *Op. cit.,* p. 157.

A more democratic authority, which is from the beginning based on a give-and-take relationship, a degree of understanding, and an attempt at fairness, is conducive to a gradual reduction of parental authority and a gradual growth of a feeling of equality and mature understanding as the child becomes the adolescent and the adolescent the youth. In such families a distinct and open eruption growing out of the authority pattern is not likely to be a psychological necessity.

These constrasting patterns of discipline are illustrative of contrasting methods of training so widely typical of family situations. The one is entirely negative; the other is positive and constructive. The one destroys the possibility of the child's developing the power of moral decision. The other builds it gradually and normally so that when he reaches the period of adolescence he is ready for independence. The one brings him to adolescence, when he is forced to strike out for himself, without having given him opportunity to exercise decision. The other provides that opportunity.

The child reared under the strict-authority pattern is likely to go to the extreme of defying the precepts and forced restrictions that have been imposed upon him. Thus we have the preacher's boy of the old school in exceptional cases becoming the unaccepted social reprobate.

The effect of the two methods of training and of authority may be illustrated by a very simple case. In one home the parent insists that the child should never play with fire, should never touch matches, etc. In the other the parent allows the child to strike matches under conditions where matches should be struck, to light the fire in the fireplace, or to light the candle, at the same time pointing out when the lighting of matches is proper and when it is dangerous. The child who is most likely to burn the house down by setting the lace curtains on fire or by building a fire under the bed or in the closet is the one who has been taught that he must never, never, never play with matches or light a fire.

TESTING THE AUTHORITY PATTERN

Modern emancipated adolescents and youths, rather than abiding by the controls established by parental authority, often tend to go as far as they can in manipulating parents to their advantage. Many of them have their parents in rather complete control and know it.

There is no stage in life when the child does not make tests of parental authority. As he becomes involved in gang life, a very common device of the child in the democratic family is to play one parent against the other. The group, by combined force, obtain a half permission from one parent and then go as a group to the other parents in turn and use the added leverage of the other parent's promises. As they go from one parent to the other, the argument increases in force. They soon learn which parent is the easiest to persuade and leave to the last the parent who is most persistent in refusing permission and bring to bear on him the force of approval of all the other parents. Similarly, adolescents who have learned that they can do it play one parent against the other with equal skill and adroitness.

In this struggle for independence from adult authority, adolescents nonetheless are often in a vague no man's land. If they plan independently of adults, they may come up in the end having their plans frustrated by being forbidden the opportunity to carry them out. If they, on the other hand, always consult the parent or other adults concerning what they would like to do, they are likely to be snubbed with the rhetorical "You can decide that for yourself," or "You can figure that out," or "Oh sure, go ahead; you don't need to ask me about that." Any such reaction from the parent or other adult is blighting to the growing ego.

YOUTH'S ATTITUDES TOWARD PARENTAL CONTROLS

The struggle between parental norms, which in a changing society represent established principles of a preceding generation, and those of youth, which represent the norms of the present, is a natural source of the conflict between the generations in a rapidly changing culture.

Commenting on the relationships between parents and children, Neblett[11] states that parents remember experience less for itself than for its consequences and, therefore, always end in evaluating in this way the attitudes and activities of their adolescent children.

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[11] Thomas F. Neblett, "Youth Movements in the United States," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 194:141–151, November, 1937.

In summarizing a large number of case histories written by college students, the White House Conference report[12] in its conclusion makes the following generalizations concerning points of friction. The points of friction in the home situation which aroused the greatest bitterness were the "elements maintained by the parents under the belief that they contributed to the child's welfare." For example, severe punishment by parents fell into this class. Most of the students felt that the punishments were administered not in hate but with the view on the part of the parents that the punishments were necessary to the development of the youth. The authors point out in this connection the need for the training of parents in the elements of child psychology.

A study of discipline among subdebs, twelve to eighteen years of age, shows that most of them considered their parents' punishments sensible.[13] It is likely that this group represents homes of more than average education and social status and, therefore, homes where a democratic authority pattern prevails.

A study by the Research Bureau of America of a representative number of students, male and female, in colleges throughout the country asked concerning the items of control that parents had exercised over the adolescent behavior. Table 5 shows the percentages of students who answered the questions.[14]

Only 7 per cent of the youths who were asked the above questions believed that the parents should not interfere with any of these activities; 93 per cent felt that parents should supervise them; some even believed that authority on such matters as drinking, smoking, making friends, and staying out late at night should be extended until twenty-one years of age. This study showed that twice as many homes were dominated by the mother as by the father, as far as control over the children was concerned. Many youths in mother-dominated homes felt that the discipline should have been more exact and inflexible.

This last point suggests that youths may sometimes criticize parental laxity. The youth who accepts a code of conduct is likely to accept it with

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[12] *Op. cit.,* p. 269.

[13] Marjorie Lederer, "We're Telling You!" *Ladies' Home Journal,* 61:20–21, December, 1944.

[14] Doris Drucker, "Authority for Our Children," *Harper's Magazine,* 182:276–282, February, 1941.

TABLE 5. *Percentage of Students Who Responded to Certain Questions Regarding Parents' Control over Their Behavior*

Did your family ever request you	Yes	No
Not to listen to a certain radio program?	5	95
Not to see a certain movie?	7	93
Not to read a certain book or magazine?	12	88
Not to see other boys and girls?	45	55
Not to smoke?	57	43
Not to drink?	60	40
Not to stay out late at night?	74	26

complete seriousness. Not having had sufficient experience to know how one must give and take in certain situations, he may be inclined to criticize his parents for reasonable variation from a rigid interpretation of the code accepted. Probably the worst fanatics and the most faithful martyrs are youths. In their anxiety to tie to something stable in the way of values, they grip ideals so loyally that they are likely to find numerous violators in their immediate environment, many of them adults. The adolescent then suffers from disillusionment in learning, as he must, that many people's actions are not straightforward and trustworthy. A period of cynicism may follow. It is likely that many serious-minded young people pass through a period of this sort.

THE SPIRIT OF REVOLT IN MODERN YOUTH

> The fatefulness of family life lies in this, that parents must dominate their children or else the children will not survive; there is a period of infancy during which there must be a clear-cut dominance of the adult over the child. The peculiar fact about this dominance is that it furnishes the adult with vicarious forms of satisfaction: the parent is apt to transfer the dominance which is necessary for the child's survival into the dominance which is necessary for his own status, and once he has made the transfer the whole problem of freedom and dominance becomes pathological.[15]

Parents and relatives, like others vested with authority, are hesitant to relinquish it. As the child approaches physical and emotional adulthood, it

[15] E. C. Lindeman, "Implications of Contemporary Social Trends for Education in Family Life and Parenthood," *Parent Education*, February, 1935.

is usually necessary for him to stage a series of revolts against authority, either by evasion or by direct challenge to the authority pattern.

The ideal of the democratic family is a mutual understanding between parents and children to the extent that parents will trust their adolescents and youth, respect their opinions and judgments, and give the young people themselves a feeling of assurance that their parents approve of what they do. When this type of relationship exists, parents need not have serious anxieties about the conduct of their young people, for the full burden of personal choice is not placed upon the young person himself. He is close enough to the parent to understand what the parent wants, and at the same time is free to choose within the field of activity which his parents have outlined as proper.

A Washington State College study of some 5,500 high-school seniors raised two questions which attempted to throw some light on the degree to which young people feel that their parents do approve their conduct and respect their opinion and judgments.[16]

The first check question with the five alternatives read: "In general, I feel that my parents approve my conduct." Table 6 gives the responses.

TABLE 6. *Responses of 5,500 High-school Seniors Who Checked the Statement: "In general, I feel that my parents approve my conduct"*

Response	Boys, per cent	Girls, per cent
Always	13.2	21.2
Almost always	65.3	63.8
Approve as often as not	17.2	11.2
Seldom approve	3.3	2.4
Never approve my conduct	0.1	0.2

It is clear that of those responding a much higher proportion of girls than boys felt that their parents always approved their conduct. An overwhelming majority of these young people felt that their families generally gave approval to their conduct, in fact, more than 75 per cent of the total group. And only a small percentage felt that their parents seldom approved. At this extreme also the boys more often felt that their parents disapproved of their conduct than did the girls.

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[16] L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems,* The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., 1949. The total figures in Tables 6 and 7 fall short of 100 per cent owing to lack of information on cases.

The second question that has bearing on this subject was phrased as follows: "My parents respect my opinions and judgment." The five alternative answers and the proportions checking these answers are given in Table 7.

TABLE 7. *Responses of* 5,500 *High-school Seniors Who Checked the Statement: "My parents respect my opinions and judgment"*

Response	Boys, per cent	Girls, per cent
All of the time	10.0	13.4
Most of the time	52.3	53.7
About half the time	27.5	23.8
Seldom respect their opinions	7.0	6.8
Never do	1.4	1.1

Here again girls felt that their parents more often respected their opinions and judgments than did boys, and fewer girls felt that their parents seldom respected their judgments. Almost two-thirds of the total group felt that their parents respected their opinions and judgments most or all of the time.

These data would seem to indicate that the democratic family was actually a reality in the majority of these homes, in the sense that parents actually extend to adolescents and youth the confidence which is necessary for attaining moral maturity.

In the tests of strength that characterize parent-child relationships from infancy to adulthood, the youth in the end must win, if he succeeds in achieving normal adulthood, in outgrowing the necessary subordination of child to parent which is the essential characteristic of immaturity.

Revolt is a means of registering independence and also of attracting attention of the peer group. In any adolescent group different degrees of freedom from parental and neighborhood authority are sure to be represented. The girl or boy with the greatest freedom from parental domination is likely to be held in considerable respect by the peer group. Some adolescents among their peers go to a hostile extreme against parents' controls or their parents' world of values, loudly repudiating all their parents' methods and standards.

These same youngsters may, on the other hand, be blind hero worshipers of other adults or older youth. Some go through the stage described by a girl who comments, "I went through the stage of thinking my parents knew absolutely nothing and that I was horribly misunderstood."

In early adolescence the test of freedom among the gang of peers is likely to be the hour when they must be in at night. Being able to stay up as late as one wishes is a prerogative of adulthood. Some parents may insist rigidly on nine-thirty, ten, or ten-thirty; others have later requirements or none at all. A year or so later the question of the hour of coming in involves not gang activity but how late the girl or boy can stay out in pair relationships.

An occasional challenge to the authority patterns of the adult group is likely to bring not only a sense of personal independence and self-expansion but also the immediate approbation of the gang. The peer group respects courage and daring.

> Through the process of rebellion against the authority and protection of adults the adolescent comes by slow degrees—and with many regressions to childish ways—to a measure of liberation from the care and supervision of those who are stronger and wiser than he. His urgency to be wholly free from control is modified in this process partly through his own recurrent desire for some protection and guidance by adults. His intellectual development, his growing ability to interpret situations and the attitudes of others, help him to various modes of constructive adaptation to circumstance.[17]

To the adolescent, the entire adult environment, with its rather fixed ideas and institutions, its frequently dogmatic and categorical "yeses" and "noes" creates natural frustrating circumstances which make revolt seem to be the way out. Revolt also has its psychological compensations. It is vitalizing, exhilarating; it brings a sense of conquest and enlargement. The experience of revolting against authority, the liberty gained by revolt, the sense of mastery that comes with being able to direct one's behavior in contradiction to childhood authority, are satisfying, in some cases so much so as to prove a stimulus to more extreme forms of revolt which carry the adolescent to the dangerous limits of threatening the mores and challenging the more basic control devices whose authority society dare not permit to be challenged. This would seem to be, in part at least, a psychological factor which makes the period of adolescence and early youth a critical period from the standpoint of character formation.

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[17] Caroline B. Zachry, *Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence,* pp. 344–345, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1940.

As the adolescent acquires the independence that accompanies his approach to adulthood, he will have more difficulties than should rightfully be his share if he has not previously been impressed in the home with a respect for the values of morality, honesty, and personal integrity. Every individual must be shaped to fit the culture pattern in which he lives. Parts of this culture pattern he may disregard with impunity; other parts, the mores, values that are associated with group survival, he must religiously respect or suffer from group censure and overt punishment.

Behind human experience are centuries of trial and error. From the years have been gleaned lessons that are in time incorporated into the group's definitions of right and wrong, proper and improper. Some of these values are found in all societies. They have to be if man is to survive as a social animal. Other more specific mores are a part of the culture of local groups only. The latter mores may be disregarded when one is away from his local group and no censure results because society at large does not hold them. But the broader definitions of right and wrong that are a necessary part of living together in the group every individual must learn and accept and practice if he is to be in harmony with the world he enters as an adult person.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. What are the accepted family norms with regard to parental responsibility? The child?
2. Show how these norms have been modified.
3. Compare the problem of moral teaching of adolescents and youths by the educated and uneducated parent.
4. At what point does the educated liberal parent fail?
5. Can school, church, or other adolescent- and youth-serving institutions fully compensate for the failure of the family to develop moral standards? Explain.
6. Can youth be blamed for sometimes being shortsighted with regard to obedience to social controls? Explain.
7. Does the liberal parent of today escape social blame if the child fails in attaining moral maturity?
8. Under what restraints do parents now exercise authority? Teachers?
9. Why should parents and teachers always have the long future of the adolescent and youth in mind when handling moral issues?
10. Has the liberal family lost all control of the child?
11. Describe ambivalent attitudes of the child toward parental authority.
12. What difficulties do parents often experience in releasing the adolescent and youth from their domination?

13. Contrast the arbitrary and democratic systems of family control with respect to (*a*) methods of teaching, (*b*) discipline, (*c*) attitudes of the child toward the authority, (*d*) effect on transition to moral independence.

14. Describe efforts of adolescents to test the authority of the family.

15. Discuss the parental rationalization, "It's for your own good," when administering severe punishment.

16. Can discipline be too lax to satisfy youth? Explain.

17. Point out satisfactions that parents may receive from being in a position of dominance. How may it affect youth's attaining independence from the family authority at the proper time?

18. What are some of the advantages and dangers of revolt from authority?

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CHAPTER 10

Religion and Moral Maturity

ATTAINING RELIGIOUS MATURITY

In Christian culture religion and morality are identified. Generally speaking, a child believes everything that has been presented to him in the field of morals and religion. In adolescence, the choice of moral and religious alternatives must be made. With the approach of adulthood, skepticism increases and all traditions are challenged. Adolescents and youth alternate between skepticism and belief, and usually at about mid-adolescence youth with religious training are either converted or begin to harbor serious doubts about basic Christian beliefs.

The age sixteen has been referred to traditionally as the most favorable age for conversion. Probably it is also the most favorable age for the beginning of atheistic and agnostic tendencies.

Evidence of the shift from complete acceptance of religious beliefs to skepticism is clearly shown in the study of Kuhlen and Arnold,[1] who prepared a questionnaire with 52 statements concerning religious belief to be checked by sixth-, ninth-, and twelfth-grade pupils. In all, 547 adolescents were studied. Some of the more important items are listed in Table 8. Note the increasing skepticism with regard to belief in God and in the Bible and in other basic fundamental tenets of religion as one moves from the twelfth to the eighteenth year of age.

This increasing skepticism of adolescents and youth expresses itself in various doubts and fears. Further analysis by Kuhlen and Arnold of their data shows that with increase in age there is growing concern, for example, over what becomes of people when they die (last item in Table 9). Only 67 per cent of the twelve-year-olds were concerned about this problem,

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[1] Raymond G. Kuhlen and Martha Arnold, "Age Differences in Religious Beliefs and Problems during Adolescence," *Pedagogical Seminar and Journal of Genetic Psychology,* 65:291–300, December, 1944.

TABLE 8. *Changes in Specific Religious Beliefs during Adolescence as Shown by the Percentage of Twelve-, Fifteen-, and Eighteen-year-old Children Who Checked Various Statements Indicating (a) Belief, (b) Disbelief, or (c) Uncertainty (Wonder)* *

Statement	"Believe"			"Not believe"			"Wonder about"		
	12	15	18	12	15	18	12	15	18
God is a strange power working for good, rather than a person	46	49	57	31	33	21	20	14	15
God is someone who watches you to see that you behave yourself, and who punishes you if you are not good	70	49	33	18	37	48	11	13	18
I know there is a God	94	80	79	3	5	2	2	14	16
Catholics, Jews and Protestants are equally good	67	79	86	9	9	7	24	11	7
There is a heaven	82	78	74	4	5	5	13	16	20
Only good people go to heaven	72	45	33	15	27	32	13	27	34
Hell is a place where you are punished for your sins on earth	70	49	35	16	21	30	13	27	34
Heaven is here on earth	12	13	14	69	57	52	18	28	32
People who go to church are better than people who do not go to church	46	26	15	37	53	74	17	21	11
Young people should belong to the same church as their parents	77	56	43	13	33	46	10	11	11
The main reason for going to church is to worship God	88	80	79	6	12	15	4	7	6
It is not necessary to attend church to be a Christian	42	62	67	38	23	24	18	15	8
Only our soul lives after death	72	63	61	9	11	6	18	25	31
Good people say prayers regularly	78	57	47	9	29	26	13	13	27
Prayers are answered	76	69	65	3	5	8	21	25	27
Prayers are a source of help in times of trouble	74	80	83	11	8	7	15	10	9
Prayers are to make up for something that you have done that is wrong	47	24	21	35	58	69	18	17	9
Every word in the Bible is true	79	51	34	6	16	23	15	31	43
It is sinful to doubt the Bible	62	42	27	18	31	44	20	26	28

* Raymond G. Kuhlen and Martha Arnold, "Age Differences in Religious Beliefs and Problems during Adolescence," *Pedagogical Seminar and Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 65:291–300, December, 1944.

Discrepancies between the totals of the responses "Believe," "Not believe," and "Wonder about," and 100 per cent represent the percentages who did not respond to the statements.

TABLE 9. *Frequency with Which Particular Religious Problems Exist at Various Ages through Adolescence as Shown by Percentage of Different Age Groups Who Check Each Problem as Sometimes or Often Present* *

Problem	12 years	15 years	18 years
Having a different religion from other people	34	25	27
Disliking church service	33	47	60
Being forced to go to church	30	31	27
Disliking parents' religion	11	8	12
Failing to go to church	67	67	67
Changing my idea of God	29	25	31
Losing faith in religion	27	32	31
Doubting prayer will bring good	37	44	35
Getting help on religious problems	53	54	56
Choosing a religion	21	20	15
Parents' objection to church membership	23	14	11
Wanting to know the meaning of religion	53	48	60
Wanting communion with God	59	47	57
Heaven and hell	53	53	66
Sin	71	62	72
Conflicts of science and religion	42	50	57
Being teased about my religious feelings	26	22	18
Wondering what becomes of people when they die	67	56	80
Number of cases	174	243	130

* Raymond G. Kuhlen and Martha Arnold, "Age Differences in Religious Beliefs and Problems during Adolescence," *Pedagogical Seminar and Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 65:296, December, 1944.

but 80 per cent of the eighteen-year-olds. The conflict between religion and science becomes more intense with older teen-agers (third item from bottom of Table 9). Of the twelve-year-olds, only 42 per cent sensed this conflict, but 57 per cent of the eighteen-year-olds. This no doubt reflects the older group's experience of having studied more natural-science courses in the upper grades. Problems of heaven and hell concerned only 53 per cent of the twelve-year-olds in this study, but 66 per cent of the eighteen-year-olds, perhaps indicating that problems of man's ultimate destiny are being debated by older teen-agers.

THE CHANGING SIGNIFICANCE OF RELIGION IN SOCIAL CONTROL

Since Christian religion has combined a religious and an ethical system, its ethical concepts have throughout the history of Christendom been a major factor in moral control within social orders dominated by Christian thought. It is just as true that in past generations religion has been a major factor in maintaining the moral codes of the individual; in fact, it has been one of the most pervasive and powerful of social-control devices in that it worked from within to motivate the individual to do what was considered right, just, and proper.

Christianity as a religion has been based on regard for a Supreme Being. As an ethical system, it has been based on the proper regard for one's fellow man. Both aspects have been considered equally obligatory for any believer.

In our society the authority of religion was derived from the Bible which was and which still is accepted by more orthodox groups as the word of God and, therefore, the final authority on matters of conduct. It is only recently that this source of authority has been challenged to the point that each individual has to make up his own mind regarding the authority of the Bible and, in fact, of the whole religious system.

Historically, it is probably safe to assume that for most adolescents the question of whether or not to believe in the accepted religion had been settled before he came onto the scene. With the coming of urban industrial civilization has come a secularization of all of life, an attempt to interpret life in terms of mechanical laws and natural forces rather than in terms of spiritual forces, supernatural powers, and miraculous events. With this newer trend of thought the basic tenets of religion and religious authority are by no means universally accepted. Today there is about as great likelihood that the adolescent will have been reared under a system which questions all religious creeds and religious beliefs as there is that he will have been reared under a system of religious control. This robs society of an important source of social control over the new generation, deprives many adolescents and youths of an abiding faith which might have given a sense of security and certainty in a changing world, and also deprives these young people of one of the strongest of moral forces.

As Link has clearly pointed out, religion based on a belief in God, the acceptance of the Ten Commandments, and the teachings of Jesus gives parents certainty and an authority with their children which they otherwise lack.[2] If this is true, its absence robs children of a lack of authority and sense of certainty regarding the essential nature of the moral universe which they would find most helpful.

God in a stable religious system is the one fixed point in the individual's universe about which he may build confidently and with assurance. This anchor for life we must assume has been removed from many youths in our society by virtue of the relatively uncertain place which religion is given in the thought and values of our time. Young people still think and talk about religion. Few topics create more interest, as topics for discussion on a college campus, for example, and yet, as Angell points out, "There is little thought of turning to the Bible for comfort and guidance." [3]

Speaking of religious attitudes of adolescents and youth in this generation, Davies states that they become so scientific in their thinking that they feel entirely self-sufficient. They have little need for religion; they are more concerned about germs, labor grievances, or financial instability than about prayer and prophets. He believes that they have been victimized by the idealizations of science at the expense of their souls.[4]

There is no doubt that the decline of religion as a social-control device has been a factor in the emergence of the new and critical problem of sexual adjustment in the life cycle of the adolescent. In past generations, belief in God, a consciousness of his eternal surveillance of the individual even in his most secret life, was a powerful factor in helping adolescents control this sex drive. Some, however, believe that the removal of religious control in this sphere has been desirable, since Christianity historically has associated sex with uncleanness. Such an attitude worked against proper sexual adjustment even in marriage.[5]

RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN THE ADOLESCENT-YOUTH PERIOD

In previous generations the mental conflicts of youth more often centered about problems of religion than they do today, since religious values had a more prominent place in the culture pattern of a few generations ago. In that culture everyone was faced with the challenge of accepting it and being converted or of openly revolting against it. The whole system of social control was built more directly about God and the authority of the Bible. The motive of fear was kept prominently before children in their religious training. The disfavor of God and the threat of eternal damnation were control devices employed by pious parents to motivate their children and youth to a life of morality and strict religious observance. Even the fear of the coming of the end of the world or of the Second Coming of Christ were employed as control devices. The young person went through the struggle of coming to grips with the "evil" tendencies of his own nature and with the vicious tendencies of the social order.

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[2] Henry C. Link, *The Return to Religion,* pp. 103–105, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1937.

[3] Robert C. Angell, *The Campus,* p. 185, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1928.

[4] R. Davies, "Are Students Losing Their Religion?" *Christian Century,* 56:767–769, June 14, 1939.

[5] Harry Elmer Barnes has argued this case forcefully. For a good discussion, see his *Society in Transition,* Chap. 10, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1939.

Today this kind of religious philosophy, while it still sometimes prevails among families, especially in the deep South, in more isolated rural areas, and among the socially dispossessed of both rural and urban America where revivalistic sectarian groups flourish, is no longer the dominant pattern of the American culture. In more liberal-minded homes, the child never faces religious controls of this character.

As life has become increasingly secularized, religion has disappeared as a major factor in the mental conflicts of the adolescent. In its place new social controls have been instituted. Major conflicts in personality now center around problems of social adjustment rather than adjustment to a God-centered world of religious reality. The modern church's approach to religion is primarily in terms of attaining adequate social adjustments and maintaining proper social relationships rather than of establishing working relationship with the Creator, in terms of an abundant life in this present world rather than preparation for the world to come.

Even today periods of doubt and religious skepticism are a natural part of the adolescent-youth period for many. The high school introduces the child for the first time on an extensive scale to the kind of teaching characterized by reasoning and the presentation of unsolved problems and question raising. It is only natural at this stage that those who have been exposed to the more dogmatic teaching should raise questions and try to rationalize their knowledge and make it fit into an orderly scheme. For example, a religion that emphasizes the miraculous, the supernatural, and similar influences which supersede scientific law and which supersede known behavior, presents a natural challenge to the reasoning of the scientific mind. One youth expressed the problem well in the following statement:[6]

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[6] From a student paper in the author's collection.

> My family environment led me to recognize that certain meteorological factors caused rain. My religious beliefs cause me to believe that if the need of rain was felt in South Dakota and the people of a community faithfully prayed for rain, it would be forthcoming in spite of the meteorological conditions. Or rather I should say that God would arrange the meteorological conditions so that it would rain.

In the next case the questioning attitudes of the one parent offered the girl a way of solving conflict growing out of conservative religious training.[7]

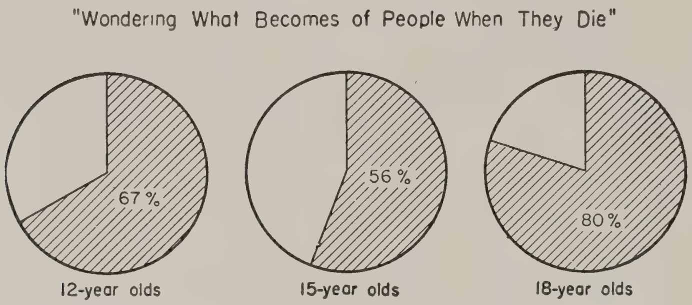

FIG. 14. INCREASING AGE BRINGS INCREASING CONCERN OVER HUMAN DESTINY.

In spite of skepticism regarding religious tradition and church formalities, young people must still answer for themselves the questions that have always concerned mankind. (*Data from Kuhlen and Arnold, Pedagogical Seminar and Journal of Genetic Psychology,* 65:291–300, *December,* 1944.)

> During the period of confirmation, the minister quizzed us on the catechism and Bible history. In his explanation of the catechism during class periods, even I could pick obvious flaws. He condemned card playing, dancing, etc., as truly the work of Satan, and all people of more liberal views as followers of the devil. On my trips to Washington, D.C., Seattle, etc., I had met many well-educated people who played cards, etc., and yet held high positions socially and industrially. I objected to his views, but I did not object vocally. I had read quite extensively and because of my father's fondness for good rhetoric, enunciation, and pronunciation, I had formed the habit of mentally criticizing the construction and delivery of every speech that I heard; consequently, I mentally found fault with his views as well as his expression of his views. He was a fundamentalist. I had heard my parents and their friends argue about questions pertinent to such views. My father, due no doubt to a scientific education, took the scientific viewpoint in interpreting the Bible. I thought my father could not be wrong, his ideas answered my everlasting "why";

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[7] *Ibid.*

> therefore, I accepted his views. We of the family soon realized that we would never win my mother to see the soundness of our scientific interpretation of the Bible, etc.; consequently, we never speak of it. We all attend church and although some of us hold different views, we accept the ritual, etc., as the thing to satisfy our search for something we call religion.
>
> I have formed my own religion. It is a belief in a divine power. Evolution is a proved fact as far as I am concerned, so it doesn't enter my ideas of religion. I am always irritated by many of the outgrown traditions and customs of most churches. I have introduced into my religion many of my own conclusions regarding conventions. I find my religion satisfactory. I do not explain my views to very many people because I have found too many people who consider me misguided or eccentric because I question some things which they have accepted as true and final.

The traditional approach to religion by many churches, especially those of an emotional sort, creates a gulf of difference between a youth and the adults of his family who are established in the faith. This problem was reflected strikingly in Baldwin's study of youth in Homeland,[8] a foreign-nationality neighborhood. Research workers reported that "the self-contained spirituality of the older generation left little opportunity for a sympathetic understanding of the ideals of adolescence." At the same time adolescents in the community were impatient with "crystallized dogmas" of their elders. Being confined to the religious ideologies of the neighborhood, the young people had no chance to acquire sufficient perspective to analyze and compare their creed with others. If they rejected the local faith, they had little opportunity to readjust their ideas toward a broader concept of religion. The study also reports that the adolescents were too emotionally healthy to enter into the sectarian conflicts which added some vitality to the religious tenets of the elders.

Even where religious ideologies do not produce conflict in the mind of the adolescent and youth, the attempt of parents to project the family religion and its supplementary social taboos onto the child may create strain in adolescent-youth adjustments to out-group patterns. The following case is not unusual:[9]

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[8] Bird T. Baldwin, E. A. Fillmore, and Lora Hadley, *Farm Children,* pp. 30–31, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1930.

[9] Samuel Haig Jameson, "Adjustment Problems of University Girls because of Parental Patterns," *Sociology and Social Research,* 24:262–271, January-February, 1940; case from p. 266.

> I was raised in a strict Methodist home. We had prayers, reading of the Bible, etc., every night. My parents fear my deterioration in this school. Maybe they are right, because I have changed my religious views largely since coming here. . . . I didn't learn to dance until I came here. My brother and I took dancing lessons after gaining our parents' consent for "social pressure and prestige's sake." But they are worried over us now.

For the majority of youth, the period of skepticism gradually merges into a period of acceptance, either because they become weary of the struggle with doubt or because they find rational justification for a sufficient number of their beliefs to make the rest acceptable. Others, unable to reconcile religious and scientific views, discard their religion in favor of science. Still others, who have had religion identified with narrow and unreasonably restrictive social taboos, find it necessary to discard the family religion as they leave the family and become participants in more normal social situations. Because their religious training was of negative restrictive taboos rather than of dynamic ideals, their religion ceased to be useful.

We have shown that religious attitudes reflect the kind of culture in which youth develops. The nature of religious conflict also relates to the emphasis the culture pattern gives to religious decision. As Mead has pointed out,[10] "The point at which society decides to stress a particular adjustment will be the point at which the adjustment becomes acute to the individual." She goes on to show that this is particularly true of adjustments to cultural values like religion, which are not directly oriented to physiology. The time at which religious problems become acute in the experience of the youth is the period that social usage in the particular society considers suitable.

YOUTH AND THE CHURCH

Institutional norms of the church are about as inexact today as those of other institutions. In previous generations the church had one great objective which all understood; that was salvation of the individual soul. Allegiance to the church assured one the protection of his eternal welfare, the saving of himself from damnation. This institutional norm was clear and well defined.

Today the creed that the destiny of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever survives in several catechisms and creeds but has little place in the mission of religious teaching and practice. Into the picture has come the new institutional norm widely accepted, that religion's major function is to improve human associations. Personality development in the direction of worthy ideals rather than eternal salvation is the essence of the message of the modern church.

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[10] Margaret Mead, "Adolescence in Primitive and Modern Society," in V. F. Calverton and Samuel D. Schmalhausen, *The New Generation,* p. 182, Citadel Press, New York, 1930.

Still, however, in the background of the experience of many youth is the old value perpetuated by conservative parents or by conservative churches that consider religion's primary function to be that of saving souls. This changing norm, with all of its implications to youth as they shift from one social group to another or as they move from the old community into new communities and sample the doctrines and teachings of various church denominations, is a source of endless conflict and confusion, especially for those who have been born under the conservative pattern of religion.

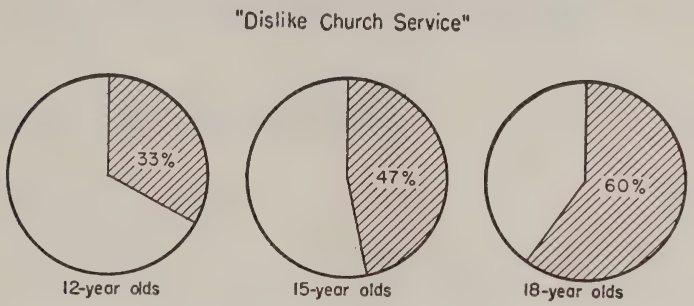

Fig. 15. A Challenge to the Church! (*Data from Kuhlen and Arnold, Pedagogical Seminar and Journal of Genetic Psychology,* 65:291–300, *December,* 1944.)

Even those who are born under the more liberal pattern may fail to realize the security that religion can offer to those who have failed to find adequate security in the home or in social groups. The security of an absolute trust, which the church once offered as a consolation to the disconcerted, is now rarely found in the attitudes of modern youths. If they fail to make social adjustments outside the church, they probably fail within the church and, therefore, find no more in religion than in other group situations where they have been too often rejected.

One often gets the impression that as far as the church itself is concerned, the youth problem today is not primarily one of religion but one of church organization and administration. The goal of the church has become churchmanship rather than sainthood, but churchmanship is too often built about adherence to denominational creed rather than the integration of moral character.

The church still struggles against its dependence on voluntary contributions and its recruitment of a ministry which is primarily attracted by the older traditional value system of religion. Unfortunately, many men who feel "called" to the ministry are men with less training, breadth, and understanding than their well-educated congregations. Too often they are not the kind of men who are able to provide leadership for youth and inspire them with the ideals of religion as represented by the church. Commenting on this problem, Abrams says, "I know of no other profession at the present time in which the morale is so low as in the Protestant ministry."[11]

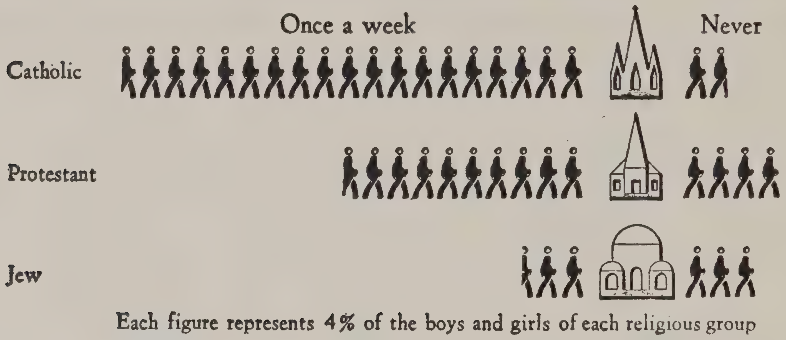

Fig. 16. The Proportion of Youth Who Go to Church Regularly and Who Never Go to Church. (*Howard M. Bell, Youth Tell Their Story, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.,* 1938.)

At the same time efficient competing organizations have come into the field. Many of the emotional, social, and recreational needs once satisfied through the church are finding expression in other social organizations and activities and in many cases are given more effective expression. The service motive even, for example, now finds vital expression in many avenues of social service more satisfactorily than in the church.

The rural ministry especially suffers from the handicaps mentioned above. This may be a factor in the low rate of church membership among farm youth.

Church membership is, according to the Maryland study,[12] much more common in cities than in farm areas, with village and town areas falling in between. Approximately 80 per cent of city youth professed church membership, only about 59 per cent of farm youth, 65 per cent of village, and 74 per cent of town youth.

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[11] Ray H. Abrams, "The Prospect for Youth and the Church," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 194:48–58, November, 1937.

[12] Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story,* p. 199, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1938.

Some 5,500 high-school seniors in the state of Washington were asked the following question with five alternatives to check: "I attend church, Sunday school (Christian Endeavor, or other young people's religious organizations)." The alternatives and the proportions checking them are indicated in Table 10.[13]

TABLE 10. *Responses of* 5,500 *High-school Seniors Who Checked the Statement on Church Attendance.*

Response	Boys, per cent	Girls, per cent	Total, per cent
Every week	23.1	33.4	28.7
Usually	14.3	22.5	18.8
As often as not	10.1	10.0	10.1
Seldom attend	36.4	24.4	29.8
Never attend	10.6	4.3	7.1

Church affiliation seems to be in part related to social class. Hollingshead in his study *Elmtown's Youth* finds none in social Class I (highest class), without church affiliation. The percentage of the other groups without affiliation is as follows: Class II, 3 per cent; Class III, 5 per cent; Class IV, 13 per cent; Class V, 16 per cent.

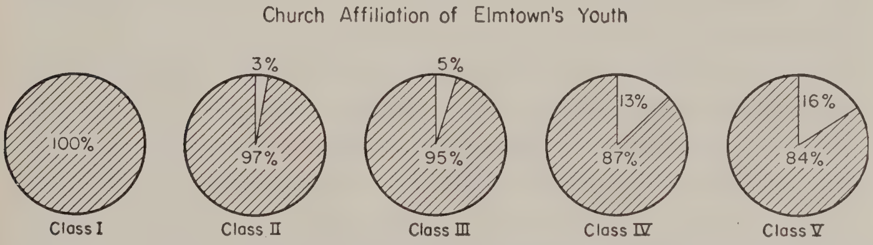

FIG. 17. THE HIGHER THE SOCIAL CLASS, THE GREATER THE PERCENTAGE OF CHURCH MEMBERS.

Does church membership bring high status, or do high-status families find more in church membership, or are high-status and multiple institutional attachments inseparable? (*Based on data from Hollingshead, Elmtown's Youth.*)

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[13] L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems,* p. 7, The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., 1949.

From this phase of his study and from reports of whether or not ministers know a particular young person, Hollingshead concludes that prominency of the family in the community has a great deal to do with whether or not the child is known by the minister and has been brought to the attention of the church community.[14]

This would, of course, be true. Social prominence consists in large part of playing many roles and having many connections. Those who participate little in community affairs and community institutions are known to few people.

THE CHURCH AND THE MIGRATION OF YOUTH

Through migration young people lose contact with the parent church and escape from the social pressures that in the home community have often been primarily responsible for this loyalty to the church and their constant attendance on its functions. Liberty from these restraints in an unfamiliar environment, combined with the difficulty of breaking into a strange church group in which there is often an urbane lack of the cordiality that characterizes the smaller church in the country and village, provides definite handicaps to the youth trying to make new institutional alignments that are satisfying to him. There is, therefore, considerable likelihood that the youth will at this time break his habit of church attendance and, in the absence of group pressures, quickly lose his former sense of obligation to the church as an institution.

It is not that the youth needs the church for its social, moral, and spiritual benefits less than formerly; he often needs it much more than formerly. But too often the home church does nothing to help those who migrate to make a satisfactory transition to the urban church by sending biographical information and other details about the youth to the pastor in the community where the youth locates. There are, of course, many exceptions to this observation. Some churches maintain a systematic exchange and follow-up system to assist the migrant person in making the institutional transfer.

THE FUNCTION OF RELIGION IN ESTABLISHING STANDARDS

The responsibility for personal decision in modern society is much greater than in most societies, because there is no universally accepted code of business ethics, of religion, or, in fact, of personal conduct.

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[14] August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth,* pp. 248–250, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1949.

In such a world it is relatively difficult for the youth to decide what is good or bad, moral or immoral behavior. In an age when morals were more absolute in character, it was easy for parents to say, "You know what is right," whereas now too often the parent is compelled to say, "Well, use your own judgment," which may be enough if the child has been given sufficient codes to have a basis for judgment, but too often he has lived in a world of so many conflicting codes that his judgment has no foundation in accepted principles.

Although there is some psychological advantage in a pedagogy that tries to omit the "don'ts" and "musts" because of their restrictive influence on life, it is certainly a dangerous world in which youth grows up without any consciousness that there are "don'ts" and that there are "musts." Ideally, of course, it is better that young people be taught positively, that they come to accept certain standards as essential to their own fullest development and greatest freedom and greatest happiness. But those who do not absorb such principles and come to be motivated by them must, as they venture into adulthood, come to recognize that there are many "don'ts" and many "musts" for individuals who would face adulthood frankly and with the degree of maturity that is necesary to becoming a useful and functioning member of society.

The youth who has formed habits and mental attitudes favorable to the acceptance of duty and responsibility as part of adulthood is in a more favorable position to obtain a reasonable degree of satisfaction from the normal responsibilities and duties of life than one who finds each restriction and responsibility of adulthood galling.

There is, of course, equal danger in continuously facing the child and adolescent with the duties and restrictions that are so imposing that his personality finds no satisfactory ways of self-expression. With his position so completely blocked, he may be defeated or find self-expression through rebellion, such as that expressed in delinquency, running away from home, or escaping into an imaginary world, dwelling for long periods in a world of fantasy.

In a world of indefinite standards, the emphasis upon religious duty and obligation is probably not sufficiently great to help adolescents and youths in maintaining standards. Elasticity in personality is required in a complex society, but few people can maintain integration in their life plan without some core values about which they can build. A religion that fails to provide these core values fails to meet its obligation to youth.

What the church should do to reconstruct its values and clarify its position as a character-building and confidence-giving social institution is a problem beyond the scope of this writing. Some general principles, however, can be enunciated. It is clear that the emphasis by orthodox religion upon certain rigid beliefs, many of them in contradiction to known scientific laws, is productive of mental confusion and unnecessarily puts the young person who accepts them in a position of moral quandary and mental strain. It is questionable that these dogmas have any necessary connection with man's proper relations with his Maker or with improved moral conduct.[15]

If this view is accepted, the next step would seem to be for the church to emphasize the great moral teachings of Christ, their direct application to current social affairs, and to identify religious worship and religious loyalty with the practice of these moral principles. Such a religion has logical validity, is in harmony with the Sermon on the Mount, and embodies the essential spirit of all Christian teaching. Such a religion applied to human relationships could be dynamic in human affairs and give the rising generation a motive for incorporating loyalty to the Deity in their system of beliefs.

> The most reasonable field for the operation of religion in contemporary society seems to lie in providing for the mass organization of the group sentiment of mankind in support of the larger principle of kindliness, sympathy, right, justice, honesty, decency, and beauty.[16]

The difficulty with religion of dogma, even when it succeeds well in indoctrinating children and giving them an effective basis for self-control, is that during adolescence and youth, when scientific understanding develops and the dogma is challenged, the whole foundation of self-control is shattered along with the destruction of faith in the dogmatic principles. The adolescent or youth is then left morally stranded until he reestablishes self-control on a new logical basis.

If the system of religious control could be built on a rational understanding of the laws of man's moral nature and of human obligation from the outset, many could accept the system who now do not, and those who do accept would not have to go through the experience of debunking the childhood system of religious beliefs and their sanctions in order to maintain some degree of logical consistency in their views concerning the nature of life, God, and the universe. As it is now, many individuals suffer a great deal in the process of trying to reconstruct the religious foundation. Some are never able to make the reconstruction and those who are forced to attempt it pass through a period of cynicism and skepticism. For these individuals religion loses in large part its effectiveness as a system of control, its value as a source of inspiration, and its importance as a focal point of character organization.

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[15] For a brief summary of the evidence indicating that dogmatic religious teaching may actually contribute to criminality, see Harry Elmer Barnes, *Social Institutions,* pp. 712–714, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1942.

[16] *Ibid.,* p. 706.

A second weakness of many denominational religious systems is that their religion is built into a system of narrow and restrictive social taboos that have no moral significance outside the narrow religious sect in which they are practiced. In extreme cases, this even calls for a distinctive dress. As adolescents and youths make the transfer to the out-group, they are forced to discard these restrictive social taboos, and because in their training the taboo was considered an inseparable symbol of piety, their religion goes with the taboo. If religious teaching could be identified with those broader principles of morality by which all civilized men must live—consideration for others, regard for one's own health, kindness, tolerance, etc.—there would never be a reason for discarding it as youth adjust to the demands of the out-group. The importance in this difference in emphasis is illustrated in the following case of a girl who grew up in a church where the religion consisted primarily in a system of moral taboos. Hell was promised to those who played cards, danced, smoked, etc. Revolting against this interpretation of religion and as a consequence against all religion, this girl describes the reestablishment of her confidence in religion and its merits when her parents moved to a new community and she met new people. Becoming a close friend of the daughter of a minister of a more liberal church, she began attending church in a new denomination. She describes the results of this experience.

> One of the greatest benefits of my friendship with Elinor was the concept I acquired of religion and of the young people who believed in religion. I had always thought that people who attended church faithfully were smug and rather stupid. I discovered that they were sincere in their beliefs, that church was their whole life and social scheme. God came to have a clearer meaning for me. I started to attend her church and was confirmed. I even became the Sunday-school teacher of seven-year-olds. Religion and God became a part of my life. I believed in them. I began to apply religion to my everyday life and once again to have faith.

Clearly, if religion and the church are to meet the spiritual needs of educated young people, they must build on essentially rational moral principles and not rely fully on dogma and tradition.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the years of adolescence and youth as years of religious decision.
2. Cite evidence to show a change in attitudes and beliefs.
3. Compare the present influence of religion as a control device with the past.
4. Discuss the possible advantages and disadvantages of this change.
5. Discuss fear as a control device of religion. Is it prominent today?
6. Are adjustments in the field of religion of primary importance in adolescent experience today? Explain.
7. Give instances in which young people are troubled over religious issues.
8. Show how social taboos of religious sects may affect the young person in making successful adjustments to the out-group.
9. Outline ways in which young people make their final adjustments to religion.
10. Discuss the significance of a lack of clear-cut moral principles in religious teaching as it affects the attainment ot moral maturity by adolescents and youths.
11. For what goal should the church aim in its moral teaching? How might this goal be best achieved?
12. Cite possible reasons for rural youths' lack of interest in church.
13. Discuss the relationship between social status and church membership.
14. How might the church be of greater moral support to migrating youth?
15. What might the church do to make religion a greater moral force in the lives of young people?

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CHAPTER 11

Failure in Attaining Moral Maturity

SITUATIONS PRODUCTIVE OF CHARACTER DETERIORATION

Since moral maturity is a product of learning, it comes with experience in making choices. The person must know standards by which he can be guided. These standards must have been taught him by others. Teaching may be formal or informal, but however the standards are taught and learned, the child must have them as a first step in attaining moral maturity. Second, he must have had sufficient experience with choice to have the strength of will to take the socially approved course even when other alternatives appear more attractive to him. One who is morally mature has not only learned the standards of the group but has come to practice them habitually.

The ease with which youth attain moral maturity is, as we have seen, dependent in part upon the simplicity of the standards presented and the number of alternate choices which he faces. In our society of highly diverse standards on the one hand and numerous alternatives on the other, it is difficult for youth to attain moral maturity.

Situations in which moral failure is most common are those in which:

1. The person lives in a disorganized culture, or in a disorganized period, when social controls are ill defined and when temptations to diverge from the patterns of control are great. The Second World War was such a period in American society, as is evident in the trend of juvenile delinquency during that period (see chart on page 189).

2. The person struggles to choose between the control devices of two or more groups with different standards, each of which has succeeded in making a claim on him. He is torn between alternatives. To choose the patterns of one is to court the disfavor of the other. The struggles of adolescents over the standards of the parents and those of the peer group present a never-ending source of conflict for many in our time.

3. Social controls are not sufficient to regulate personal appetites and give the person strength to bring them in line with social expectations. Kinsey's study, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male,* illustrates very clearly the struggle of the adolescent boy over his strong sex drives and the restrictive taboos which surround him. It shows that quite generally the animal appetite is satisfied through various sex outlets condemned by social codes.

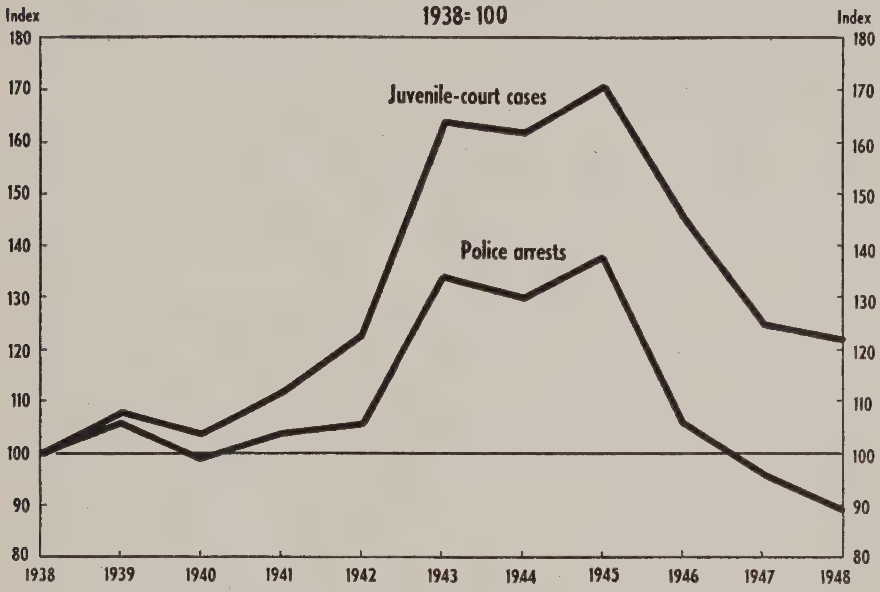

Fig. 18. Trend of Juvenile Delinquency, 1938–1948.

In times of social disorganization, such as war, youthful offenses mount rapidly. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

Let us consider more fully some of the conflicting currents of influence that make the attainment of moral maturity difficult under the highly complex American culture pattern.

CONFLICTING CULTURE PATTERNS AND PERSONAL MORAL FAILURE

The 1950–1951 basketball season was in many respects a disillusioning one in the field of American intercollegiate sports, for during that season several leading athletes were found guilty of accepting bribes to throw games. The center of corruption was New York City, but evidence of similar delinquencies was found in other places. The American public was shocked.

Grief-stricken youth confessed that they had, for money, sacrificed the honor of their college and of their team.

If we analyze this situation objectively, we should not be surprised that athletes would yield to the temptation to accept bribes.

Consider the fact that practically all intercollegiate athletics are subsidized. Most athletes choose their school on the basis of the best offer for jobs or for outright subsidies. Every outstanding athlete who graduates from an American high school is visited by coaches and college representatives from various schools, each trying to persuade him that his school offers superior advantages. Usually these advantages are not educational advantages, but advantages in terms of actual monetary or equivalent reward for attending the school and playing on the team.

These practices are also universally condemned by the rules, but in practice they are acknowledged to exist in most schools. There is little difference between accepting a subsidy for attending a particular college and accepting a bribe. Both are overtly condemned. In the one case, the rule being violated is that of a particular athletic conference or some other set of amateur sports group. In the other case, of course, the rule being violated is the law of the state or nation. But both kinds of rule breaking offer quick ways of getting ahead, of actually beating the game in a highly competitive situation.

This example is given to illustrate how thin the dividing line is between right and wrong, between crime and approved violation of the rules.

A lack of clear-cut definitions in the system of social control is always a factor in personal strain and delinquency. Sociological studies make it clear that, where social control breaks down, the individual suffers for a lack of protection against his own drives.[1]

Students of American cities have observed that suicide, juvenile delinquency, crime, divorce, desertion, and even dementia praecox or schizophrenia, one of the most common forms of mental disease, are concentrated in communities where social disorganization is characteristic. Such areas are without neighborhoods, without intimate friendships, and without the pressures of gossip, neighborly interest, and strong public opinion.

Cavan[2] found that in the city of Chicago suicide rates were highest in areas of community disorganization where family life is weak and where the individual has few ties to bind him, few roots in intimate social soil, few people to care. Similarly, in such areas criminal gangs make of crime a profession, and juvenile gangs imitate the behavior of these heroes of the underworld. In these same areas of loneliness and social isolation, primarily areas populated by hobos, rooming-house dwellers, and transients, high rates of schizophrenia are found, the type of mental disease where a person withdraws from life and escapes into a created world of fantasy. "Where there is no desire to be understood or no hope of being understood, there is no need for the use of logic."[3]

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[1] For a comprehensive study of social controls, see Paul H. Landis, *Social Control; The Process of Social Organization and Disorganization,* J. B. Lippincott Company, Chicago, 1939.

[2] Ruth S. Cavan, *Suicide,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1928.

Zorbaugh,[4] studying the world of furnished rooms in Chicago, a world where anonymity prevails, found that people substituted objects and pets for human association, formed temporary marriage relationships without marriage ceremonies, and resorted to other devices for finding association and meaning in life. Some sought escape in suicide. Similarly, Hayner[5] has described the mental experiences of professional hotel dwellers, people who have broken attachments to things, places, and people. As a whole they are restless and unhappy. Lacking integration into the social structure, they find difficulty in maintaining integration within their personalities.

A study of family disorganization in areas of Chicago shows clearly that the character of the community is closely related to the amount of divorce. Of the 70 areas studied, some had no divorce. At the other extreme were areas that had rates ranging up to 68 per 10,000 people. Areas with the highest divorce rates were in the rooming-house, kitchenette-apartment house, and apartment-house areas.[6] These areas where divorce and desertion are so common are usually near the heart of the city. Divorces decrease as one reaches the periphery of the city, where living conditions are more normal and life is more stable, the total environment more secure and more satisfying.

In a lesser sense, many parts of American society aside from disorganized areas of cities have lost integrating social influences. The lack of clear-cut moral tradition, which is so applicable to our time and which goes to the opposite extreme from the rigid, positive, unbending world of a few generations ago, puts adolescent and adult alike under strain. William McDougall, social psychologist, has pronounced neurasthenia the characteristic American disease and describes America as a nation of neurotics. He contends that it is because America has cast aside tradition and, therefore, has no resting place. In tradition there is stability and assurance. Neurosis, he believes, is a consequence of moral conflict. Crime, also, he attributes to this lack.[7]

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[3] See Robert E. L. Faris, "Cultural Isolation and the Schizophrenic Personality," *American Journal of Sociology,* 40:155–164, September, 1934; also, H. Warren Dunham, "The Ecology of the Functional Psychoses in Chicago," *American Sociological Review,* 2:467–479, August, 1937.

[4] H. W. Zorbaugh, *The Gold Coast and the Slum,* Chap. 4, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1929.

[5] Norman S. Hayner, "Hotel Life and Personality," *American Journal of Sociology,* 33:784–795, March, 1928.

[6] Ernest R. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization,* pp. 116–122, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1927.

In the place of tradition, upon which more conservative lands are content to rest, America has substituted ideals. Ideals are something for which one strives rather than which one already possesses. Striving for them is a factor in neurotic disorders.

Much of Walter Lippmann's analysis in his *Preface to Morals* is based on a similar conception of America's lack of clear-cut social definitions which leaves the individual in moral confusion. The very variety of behavior norms not only complicates problems of choice but makes any adopted set of codes less binding and compulsive.

Clearly, adolescents and youth coming to maturity in a setting of cultural disorganization have great difficulty in finding clear-cut norms for behavior which can be accepted as a basis for personality integration. On them fall problems of choice in the moral field concerning issues for which young people in less complex societies are given ready-made patterns.

CHOICE OF CONFLICTING CULTURE PATTERNS

A second kind of social situation which is productive of personal disorganization and lack of moral integration is illustrated by the immigrant child who is making a desperate effort to bridge the gap between moral standards, behavior patterns, codes and ideals of the parental family, who represent the Old World manner of life, and the new school and neighborhood community which represent the new and required way of life for him. This conflict of two distinctly different external patterns becomes a personal conflict in the experience of the child. Forced to choose at an early age, moral stress and many times moral failure result.

Mental disease has been high among immigrants and their children. Juvenile-delinquency rates have been higher among children of immigrant groups settling in cities than among any other group in the population. The child, finding the family pattern incompatible in the larger social situation

[7] William McDougall, "Crime in America," *Forum,* 77:519–523, 1927.

to which he must adjust in school and neighborhood, revolts against parental authority. He usually does this so early in life that he is unable to select wisely from the complex system of codes in the environment about him with the natural consequence that he becomes involved in complications with the law. In this case the problem is as much that of the bewildered parent as of the contrary child.

High delinquency rates have not characterized immigrant children reared in rural areas where the parents have been able to maintain the old traditions until the child reaches maturity. Nor have delinquency rates been high among all immigrant groups in the urban community. The children of Chinese parents, for example, do not show the high delinquency rates of other second-generation immigrants. The Chinese have settled in colonies in the city. Owing to family tradition, the parents and neighbors in these immigrant colonies keep a strict control over the children, so that the Chinese child rarely comes before the law-enforcement officials.

The usual immigrant child in the American city has been most characteristic in American life of the person suffering the strain of straddling two cultures. Without his choosing he has one foot in each. The person who is compelled to straddle two cultures and try to harmonize them into one way of life has been called a "marginal man," the idea being that he lives in the fringe of each of two distinct worlds.

Is this situation characteristic only of the immigrant child or does the problem, illustrated in the extreme in this instance, have applicability in a lesser degree to all youth today? We believe it does. Not only the immigrant child but many other adolescents also find the family pattern in direct contrast with that of peer groups. For all these, attaining moral maturity involves choice and the risks of choosing.

Thomas's[8] analysis of the delinquent girl makes clear that many girls from underprivileged homes, who despair of ever obtaining the things they want in life by remaining faithful to their parents' standards, are willing to pay any price to obtain fine clothes, easy money, meals in fine hotels with well-dressed male escorts, and other such experiences which satisfy their desire for thrills, luxury, and status. Sex delinquency begins, not with sex desire, but "Sex is used as a condition of the realization of other wishes." "Amusement, adventure, pretty clothes, favorable notice, distinction, freedom in the larger world which presents so many allurements and comparisons," are the beginning of delinquency.[9]

[8] William I. Thomas, *The Unadjusted Girl,* Little, Brown & Company, Boston, 1923.

[9] *Ibid.,* p. 109.

Minehan's study[10] of boy and girl tramps on the road showed that many of the boys were driven from home by conflict with the authority of the parent and by desperate economic conditions, compared to which the venture into the world outside looked appealing. With girls there was the added motive of love. Often they left an unsatisfactory home to follow a boy they loved.

To a lesser extent, the everyday moral choices of adolescents and young people involve conflicts of group standards. Take the common moral decision centering about smoking, drinking, and petting. The degree of acceptance of these patterns depends on the gang; the degree of conflict over the issue, or whether there will be a conflict at all, depends principally upon the difference between peer-group standards and parental standards. The extent to which these choices emerge in the period of adolescence and youth is indicated by a survey of Sub Deb Club members of the *Ladies' Home Journal*.[11] For the question, "Have you ever smoked?" the answers were as given in the accompanying table.

Response	12–15 years of age, per cent	16–18 years of age, per cent
Yes	25.2	58.3
No	74.8	41.7

For the question, "Have you ever had a drink?" the answers were as follows:

Response	12–15 years of age, per cent	16–18 years of age, per cent
Yes	43.3	55.2
No	56.7	44.8

The data probably represent primarily town and city youth and those from more privileged homes. An American Youth Commission study[12] on the question of drinking compared rural youth sixteen to twenty-four years of age. Of the total group of over 13,000 youth, it showed that 52.9 drank (see Table 11). At the other extreme 19.3 per cent were generally opposed to drinking. It will be seen that rural young men are almost as likely to drink as urban youth, but rural girls are much less likely to drink than urban girls. Only 15.5 per cent of urban girls are opposed to drinking as compared to 32 per cent of farm girls. Twice as many farm girls as farm boys are opposed to drinking.

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[10] Thomas Minehan, *Boy and Girl Tramps of America,* Rinehart & Company, Inc., New York, 1934. See especially Chap. 3, "Why Did They Leave Home?"

[11] Marjorie Lederer, "We're Telling You!" *Ladies' Home Journal,* 61:20–21, December, 1944.

[12] Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story,* pp. 236–240, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1938.

TABLE 11. *Attitude of Youths, Sixteen to Twenty-four Years of Age, toward the Drinking of Intoxicating Beverages* *

Group	Number of youth reporting	Percentage in each youth group		
		Drinks	Does not drink	
			Not opposed	Opposed
All youth	13,368	52.9	27.8	19.3
Male	6,821	60.7	24.9	14.4
Female	6,547	44.7	30.8	24.5
Farm male	1,583	60.4	23.7	15.9
Farm female	1,202	33.3	34.7	32.0
City male	3,065	63.2	26.6	10.2
City female	2,921	53.3	31.2	15.5

* Adapted from Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story*, Table 95, p. 238, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1938.

For data on conflict between young people's behavior in these fields and their beliefs, refer again to the chart on page 138.[13]

THE MORAL CONFLICT ISSUING FROM THE CLASH OF ORGANIC DRIVES WITH SOCIAL CODES

A third situation producing personality conflict and inducing moral strain, and often moral delinquency, is the conflict between physical appetites and social regulations. This conflict is illustrated by sex delinquencies and vice.

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[13] Based on *Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People* made in 1949.

The strength of individual appetites varies greatly from individual to individual. This is true not only of appetites present at birth but also of cultivated appetites. The system of social control is designed to regulate the average individual. Some individuals have, by heredity or by acquisition or both, such powerful appetites that the system of social control proves inadequate to hold them in check. Lombroso,[14] famous Italian criminologist, believed that about a third of all criminals were atavistic, that is, they harked back to an early period in the history of the race. Although his theory is no longer accepted, it should be recognized that he was near stating a truth which is of profound significance in understanding human nature. Some individuals inherit overpowering appetites which no reasonable system of social control could be expected to hold in check. It is to be expected, therefore, that the sex drive cannot always be controlled.

Kinsey's[15] studies indicate that even in our society with its many sex taboos socially nonsanctioned sex outlets are found by most normal individuals. There are also sex delinquents and sex perverts in the best regulated society. Some acquire appetites and habits that overpower them to the point where they become victims of their own vices.

The extent to which the vices of sex perversions, sex excesses, alcoholism, and drug addiction are a result of physical appetite as such, and the degree to which these patterns are psychological in origin, a response to insecurity, is a matter of debate, but no doubt some persons, because of physical appetite, do succumb more easily than others.

When one admits this, he must also state that the extent to which these more vicious expressions of appetites are exhibited depends a great deal upon the effectiveness of the training system and general regulative system under which the individual lives. The breakdown of social controls such as are designed to protect a man from his own vices, and to protect society from them, tends to disappear in the frontier mining town and cow town.[16] There many individuals become victims of vice and destroy themselves who would under a more effective system of social regulation remain respected citizens, masters of themselves, and recipients of the respect of their fellows. This suggests that the number of people who fail to achieve moral integration and acceptability of character depends a great deal on the effectiveness with which morals are taught and with which the regulative system is maintained.

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[14] Cesare Lombroso, *Crime: Its Causes and Remedies* (translated by Henry P. Horton), Little, Brown & Company, Boston, 1911.

[15] Alfred M. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male,* W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1948.

[16] See Paul H. Landis, *Three Iron Mining Towns* for cases, Edwards Bros., Inc., Ann Arbor, Mich., 1938.

The pedagogical application of these basic principles to the moral training and moral salvation of adolescents and youth is clear. It is important that society, through various institutions, the child clinic, the visiting teacher, the juvenile court, personal conference in the schoolroom, psychological and emotional examinations, and by every device possible, help children, adolescents, and youth who are obviously suffering under the strain of conflicting patterns to reach a point of harmonious adjustment.

Father Flanagan preached the philosophy that there are no bad boys. He proved his contention by taking many of the worst and placing them in an environment where sufficient social incentives were provided to motivate them to choose the right behavior pattern. What Father Flanagan did every school system should be able to do if the best intelligence were applied to the problem of moral teaching and social regulation.

The school often gives up because the home is deficient, but the deficiency of the home is all the more reason why the school, or some other institution given the custody of adolescents and youth, must by every known device reach a point of understanding with them and attempt to bring them to a socially acceptable moral adulthood.

It is, in short, a catastrophe that a nation of universal free public education, of churches and Sunday schools, of playgrounds and numerous other social institutions for the uplift, care, and guidance of children, adolescents, and youth, should see so many leave the school system for a life of crime and other forms of moral delinquency. The social cost of saving many of these individuals by a greatly elaborated system of guidance and training for pathological types in the making would be much less than the terrific cost society now pays for needless crime, mental disease, and suicide.

Part of the responsibility for the lack of early detection of behavior problems that have disastrous long-time social consequences lies in the inadequacies of the teacher-training system. There is too little training in psychology, normal and abnormal, too little emphasis on mental hygiene, too little development of ability to understand and recognize a behavior problem that has serious consequences if allowed to persist. The teacher is inclined to rate a behavior problem in terms of the amount of personal inconvenience it causes her in the classroom situation rather than in terms of its symbolic meaning and of its consequences to the adolescent or youth and to society.

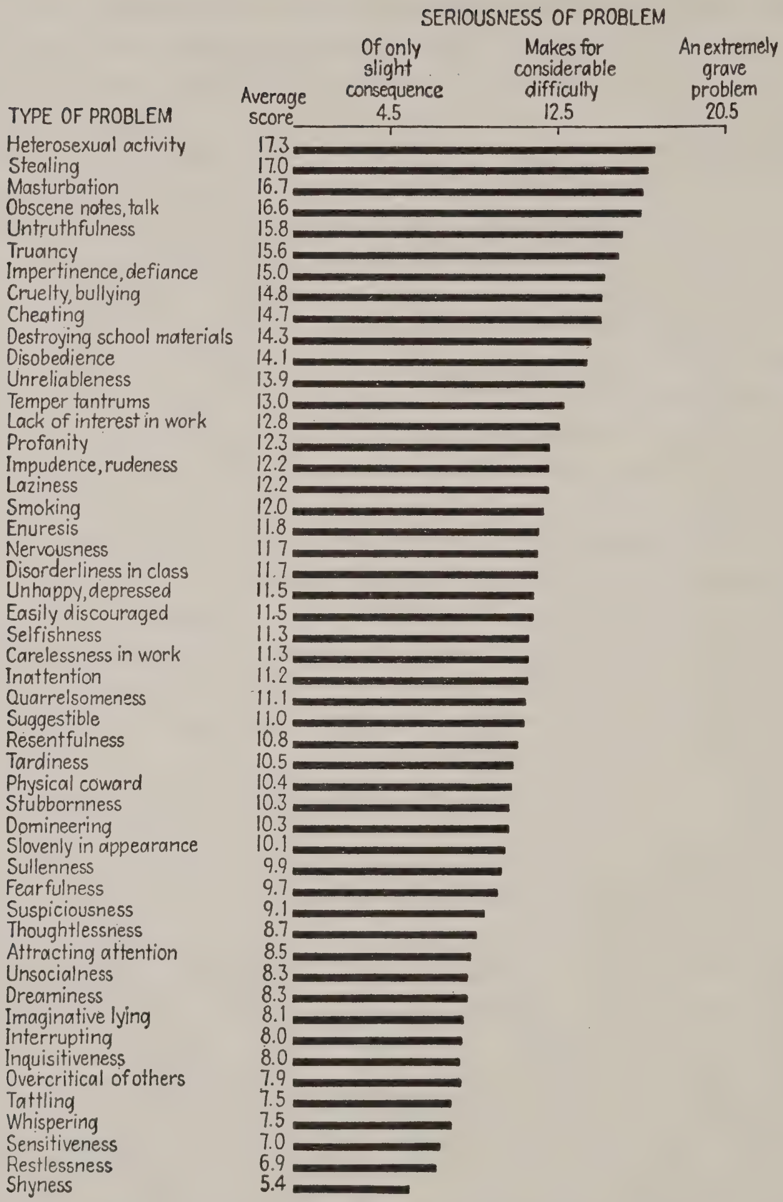


FIG. 19A. TEACHERS' RATINGS ON THE RELATIVE SERIOUSNESS OF 50 COMMON BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS OF CHILDREN.

Teachers list traits that are serious from a disciplinary standpoint and from the standpoint of moral taboos. Compare their ratings with those of mental hygienists on the opposite page. (*E. K. Wickman, Children's Behavior and Teachers' Attitudes, Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, New York,* 1928.)

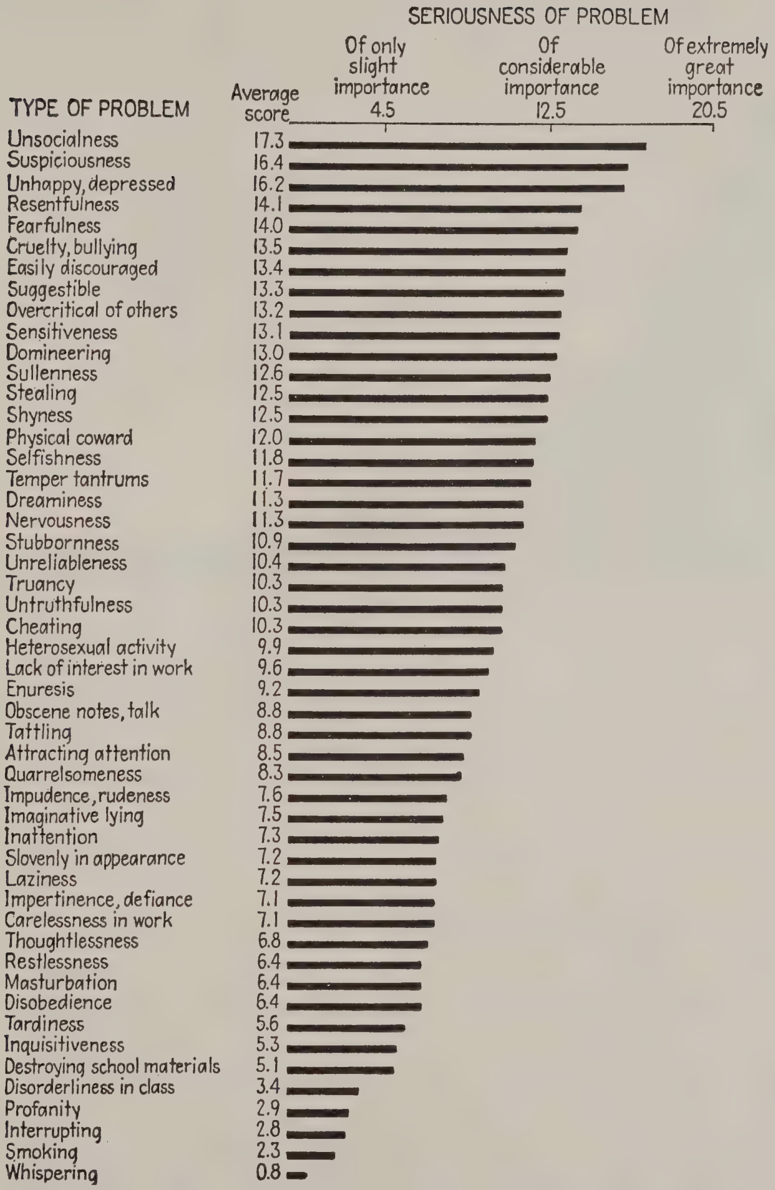
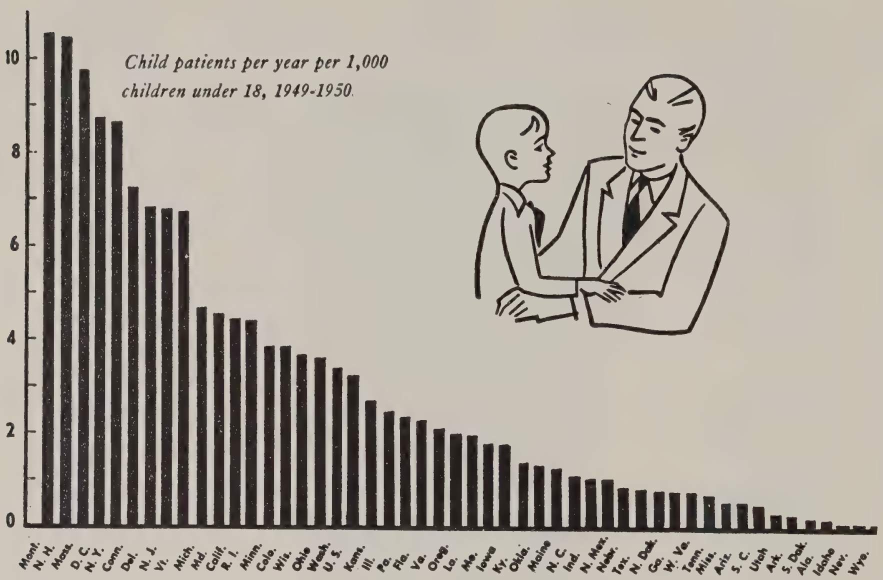


FIG. 19B. MENTAL HYGIENISTS' RATINGS ON THE RELATIVE SERIOUSNESS OF 50 COMMON BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS OF CHILDREN.

Mental hygienists consider traits important in terms of the long-time effect on personality development. The list of traits is the same as in the preceding chart; compare mental hygienists' ratings with those of teachers. (*E. K. Wickman, Children's Behavior and Teachers' Attitudes, Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, New York,* 1928.)



Most States have little psychiatric clinic service for children

FIG. 20. PREVENTIVE AND CURATIVE WORK WITH CHILDREN IS INADEQUATE IN ALL AREAS.

Many psychiatrists do not handle children's cases; others have long waiting lists. Early preventive treatment can help many children who might otherwise fail in achieving moral maturity to develop a healthy and happy personality. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

The trait that the teacher rates as being most important from a disciplinary standpoint is not likely to be the one that the expert in children's problems would rate as being most significant.[17]

An important study on this point[18] compares the ratings of 511 teachers and 30 practicing mental-hygiene clinicians on 50 common behavior problems of school children. There is little similarity in the ratings of the two groups as to problems that are of most serious import. The mental hygienist rates as most serious: problems of being unsocial, suspicious, unhappy, and depressed; resentfulness, fearfulness, cruelty and bullying. Teachers, on the other hand, rate as most serious: heterosexual activities, stealing, masturbation, obscene notes and talk, untruthfulness, and truancy. (Compare Figs. 19A and 19B.)

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[17] For an interesting summary of evidence on this point, see Lloyd A. Cook and Elaine Forsyth Cook, *A Sociological Approach to Education,* Chap. 20, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1950.

[18] E. K. Wickman, *Children's Behavior and Teachers' Attitudes,* Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, New York, 1928.

Teachers consider conduct primarily in terms of traditional mores and school norms. Mental hygienists consider it in terms of its likely consequences to the future development of the personality. A balance of these two points of view, in fact a full appreciation of both of them, would seem to be desirable in the schoolroom.

There are at all times approximately half a million children in the public schools [19] who have behavior problems that are serious from the standpoint of attaining an acceptable social maturity. It is likely that many of these most serious problems go unrecognized by the average teacher. Psychiatric services for such children are few in most states (see Fig. 20).

In order to illustrate more fully the social processes that operate in personality breakdown and moral failure, the following chapter includes an analysis of social forces operating to produce delinquency in adolescents and youths.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Discuss moral maturity as a phase of learning.
2. Illustrate how social situations may be productive of character deterioration.
3. Outline three situations in which moral failure often takes place.
4. Show how conflicting culture patterns lead to character breakdown among youth. Illustrate.
5. Relate the complexities of social definitions of right and wrong in a community to moral failure in the individual.
6. Show how the immigrant child is forced to choose between two cultures.
7. Cite typical issues of moral choice that modern young people face in the peer group.
8. Does society always succeed in restraining organic drives and appetites by social controls? Illustrate.
9. Do all societies succeed equally in restraining vicious appetites? Cite evidence.
10. Might the school do more to save adolescents and youth from moral failure? How?
11. Differentiate between a disciplinary problem and one that is likely to be indicative of serious personal or social maladjustment.
12. Discuss the need for mental hygiene and psychiatric services for children and youth.

For Selected References see end of next chapter.

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[19] This estimate was given by the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Home and the Child,* p. 293, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1931.

CHAPTER 12

Factors in Delinquency

SOCIAL CAUSATION OF DELINQUENCY

The failure of the system of social control to operate effectively in the life of the individual is evidenced early. Some criminologists claim that most of the criminals of tomorrow can be detected in the early grades of the contemporary school system. Whether this is true or not may be debated, but evidence of failure of the system of social control to regulate effectively the individual usually is seen during the period of adolescence and early youth when, for the first time, he is given greater responsibility for decision and self-direction.

Although delinquency statistics would make it appear that the period of adolescence and early youth is the period when offenses against society begin, the facts are that the kind of behavior patterns and attitudes that lead to the apprehension of the adolescent or youth may have been long practiced by the child, but because the individual was a child, the acts seemed trivial and the community and family were tolerant of them.

A century ago the standard explanation for crime was that the individual, by his own free will and choice, decided to be good or bad. We now know that the individual himself has this power of decision only within restricted limits, for his choice will be determined largely by the motivations he has been given in the social situations where his personality has been formed.

In the American scene marked contrasts in juvenile-delinquency rates of rural and urban areas reflect directly differences in social settings and social pressures as they bear on personality development.

In more stable rural communities the system of social control is integrated and certain. Delinquencies of children soon come to the attention of parents through neighbors. Parents and neighbors stamp out divergent behavior quickly so that it does not have time to take root. In many parts of the large city friendly and sympathetic neighbors are scarce. When plagued by someone else's children, adults are as likely to call the police as to call the parent even though they know who the parent is. Often the child may have committed no offense greater than playing in the wrong place.

The urban community is a world of law. The child and adult alike soon come up against the protective framework of law which must exist if people are to live together in congested spaces. In the rural environment there is little law, only a world of custom, tradition, and parental devices of ordering and forbidding, clear-cut neighborhood attitudes of good and bad. Violations of these codes are understood by sympathetic neighbors who never think of resorting to legal devices of control.

It is clear, therefore, that differences in delinquency rates of rural and urban children reflect not differences in inherent dispositions, but a difference in the social framework and the social definitions it provides for children and young people, and in the attitudes of adults toward given types of behavior of children and youth.

One may cite another example showing that differences in social experience rather than innate factors are responsible for divergent behavior. Studies relating juvenile delinquency to sibling position in the family show, as we have seen, that the oldest child tends more often to be delinquent than the younger members of the family. This obviously is not a difference in heredity but a difference in the social roles of the various members of the family. It has been suggested that perhaps the oldest child more often is involved in delinquency because he has an audience to play before in the young children and gets into the habit of being worshiped for daring deeds. Younger children, if they attempt to engage in such behavior, are likely to be disciplined by older brothers or sisters. Another possible explanation is that the older child is likely to have a much less intimate relationship with his parents than are the younger children.[1]

FACTORS IN DELINQUENCY

Adult Example. An important source of conflict for the adolescent in our society is that he begins for the first time to become conscious, as he observes and emulates adult behavior, of the striking differences he sees between accepted codes and adult practice. He is struck by the frequency with which groups of adults on occasion circumvent the moral codes, even evade the law, practice open violation with the full knowledge of community leaders or law-enforcement officials. To carry out the same violation of these verbally acknowledged codes would place youth in the class of juvenile delinquents.

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[1] For an excellent summary of studies on sibling position and its effect on personality and behavior, see Jessie Bernard, *American Family Behavior,* pp. 315*ff.*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1942.

There is little doubt that juvenile delinquency at times is a result of a deliberate and conscious patterning after these adult status-gaining forms of violation of the codes. The youth may not know how to maintain the fine distinctions which adults recognize in permitting or punishing the violation of these codes. Not knowing these subtle and unwritten distinctions, he is immediately condemned and punished. Likely as not, however, he will be condemned anyway on the ground that he is a juvenile. These sophisticated forms of petty crime and vices are devices of social distinction reserved strictly for adults, and unfortunately often for adults in a privileged set who are immune to law and custom up to a point because of the power and influence they exercise over enforcement agencies in the community. They are above paying tribute unto Caesar because Caesar is their servant, not their master.

It is inevitable, in a complex society where social classes have few dividing lines between them, that such conflicts will be prominent in the moral adjustments of adolescents and youth. There is, however, less excuse for such conflicts when parents boast of violating the very codes which they teach their children to obey.

The Community. Studies of the urban sociologist show clearly that social factors have a bearing on delinquency. In slum areas of the large city where social disorganization is reflected in suicide, poverty, and criminal gang activities of adults, children absorb the social climate of the community, and the majority of them appear before the juvenile courts before they reach the years of criminal accountability. In parts of the city where the community structure is more integrated, delinquency rates are low.

Take, for example, studies in the city of Chicago of 9,243 male delinquents by Shaw and his colleagues.[2] They show that near the business district in the center of the city where family life is disorganized and the community has few effective devices of social control, as many as 37 per cent of the children of juvenile age, ten to sixteen years, were brought before the courts during one six-month period (see Fig. 21, on next page). In other blocks of the city more distant from the city center, where community life was more stable, juvenile-delinquency rates were low. On the outer fringe of

[2] Clifford R. Shaw, *et al., Delinquency Areas,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1929.

the city where community life was stable and wholesome, delinquency was practically nonexistent.

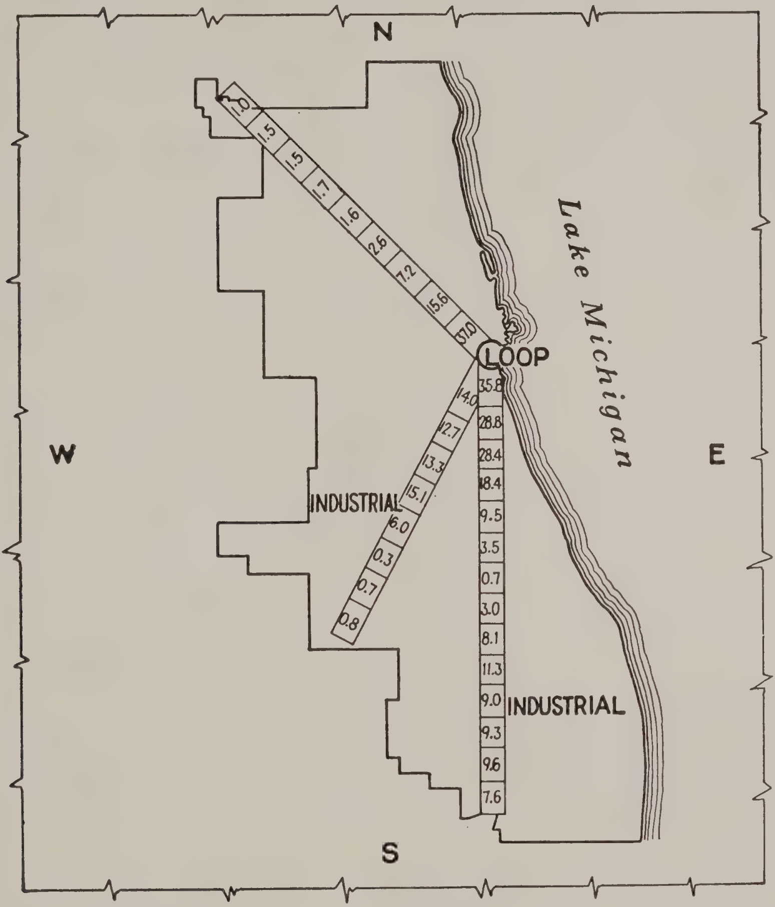
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Fig. 21. Juvenile Delinquency Rates for Mile-square Areas in Chicago.

Observe that delinquency rates reach 37 per cent in disorganized communities near the Loop district at the center of the city and decline as distance from the city center increases. In better outlying residential districts rates are extremely low. Percentages shown are based on the proportion of males ten to sixteen years of age living in the area who appeared before the police or courts during a period of six months. (*Adapted from Shaw et al., Delinquency Areas.*)

A study of 1,313 gangs in Chicago by Thrasher[3] similarly shows that in parts of the city where adolescents lack direction, the juvenile gang graduates into the criminal gang. The prerequisite to initiation to the gangs in these less desirable areas of the cities may be previous encounters with the police or having been called before the juvenile court. In the more socially integrated areas of the city, gangs participate in few nonsocial activities during the period of adolescent ganghood and graduate normally into conventional adult patterns at the age of marriage.

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[3] Frederic M. Thrasher, *The Gang,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1927.

The relationship found between poverty and delinquency is explained in part by the nature of social controls in poverty-stricken communities. The White House Conference report dealing with delinquency among adolescents[4] shows that, although delinquency rates were slightly higher among the poor, economic factors were not primarily responsible. It was clearly indicated that the type of community in which the family lived was the significant factor.

The best attempt to date to appraise various community factors which impinge on the personality of the delinquent boy and shape his personality is the Gluecks' study, which formulates the following generalizations with regard to the community orientation and experience of the delinquent and nondelinquent boy.[5] The delinquents are more mobile and more often engage in street trades. They are more inclined to be adventurous in their activities and to engage in such episodes as hopping trucks, stealing rides, keeping late hours, smoking and drinking in the early years, sneaking into theaters, getting into destructive mischief, running away from home, gambling, breaking into homes, and setting fires.

They often seek their recreation in places distant from their homes, in poolrooms or dance halls or railroad yards, or in other out-of-the-way places. They more often join gangs and more often come under the domination of older boys in gangs.

The delinquents less frequently than nondelinquents seek boys' clubs, settlement houses, and other supervised recreation. In about twice as high a proportion of cases, the delinquents dislike supervised recreation. Delinquent boys are also less frequent attenders of church.

The Broken or Disorganized Home. A break in the home by death, divorce, or separation of parents is always a critical experience in the life of the adolescent. Such experience may draw the remaining members closer together and make for greater integration of personality. It is more likely, however, especially in the case of divorce or separation, to create problems of adjustment for the child which may lead to delinquency. Studies of delinquency show relatively high rates among children from broken homes. The White House Conference report,[6] for example, shows that one-half to two-thirds of all homes where delinquency was present had been broken by death of one or both parents, or by separation or divorce.

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[4] White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Adolescent in the Family*, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1934.

[5] Sheldon Glueck and Eleanor Glueck, *Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency*, Chap. 13, Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, New York, 1950.

In interpreting these figures, one must realize that about a third of all homes are broken by the time the child reaches the adolescent-youth period, so that these figures are not so alarming as they appear on the surface. For example, the Bell study of Maryland youth, sixteen to twenty-four years of age, showed that 32.3 per cent had experienced breaks in their families.[7] The father was twice as likely to be missing from the family as the mother. The rate of broken homes is much higher in large urban areas than in smaller places and farming communities, primarily because of higher divorce rates among urban dwellers.

At a younger age broken homes are somewhat less frequent. A study[8] of 7,278 boys in Chicago public schools showed that the percentage from broken homes varied from 25.3 to 38.9 per cent, depending on the age of the boys studied. The White House Conference study of 1930 found that 21 per cent of all adolescents studied (the sample included both rural and urban young people) came from broken homes.

The Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth, held in December, 1950, showed that in the nation 13.2 per cent of all children and youth under eighteen were living with only one parent or with neither parent (Fig. 22). At that time 1,500,000 children and youth had a widowed parent, 900,000 a divorced parent, and 1,500,000 a parent away from home working, in the armed forces, in hospitals, or separated. Of those with both parents, some 6,000,000 were with a stepparent because of the remarriage of one or of both parents.

The older the child the greater the likelihood that he will have gone through a major break in the family and suffered from the strain of it.

Adding to the load of family tensions produced by husband-and-wife conflict is the neglect of children by parents. Women have increasingly entered the work world, and while many manage to work and supervise their children adequately, others do not. We have reached a point where one in five mothers with children and adolescents under eighteen years of age work outside the home (see Fig. 23).

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[6] *Op. cit.*, pp. 212–236.

[7] Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story*, pp. 19–20, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1938.

[8] Clifford R. Shaw and H. D. McKay, *Social Factors in Juvenile Delinquency*, pp. 266–277, Vol. 2 of the Report on the Causes of Crime, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1931.

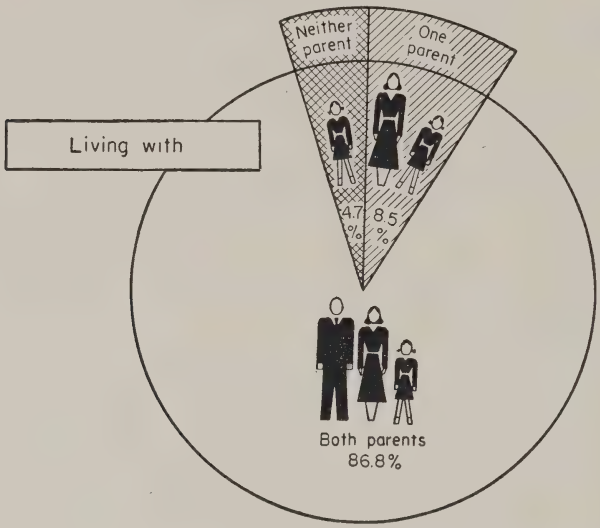

FIG. 22. ONE IN EIGHT OF OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH UNDER 18 LIVES APART FROM ONE OR BOTH PARENTS.

1,500,000 had a widowed parent, 900,000 had a divorced parent, and 1,500,000 had a parent away from home. Of the 39,000,000 living with both parents, 6,000,000 were with stepparents because of remarriage. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

The relationship between the broken or disorganized home and delinquency is a logical one. The absence of one parent removes one source of authority. The remaining member of the family usually has to be the breadwinner,[9] so that even his authority is removed during working hours. In many cases the break in the family is followed by remarriage of the remaining parent. In these cases children must adjust to stepparents.

In the case of divorce, desertion, or separation, the child may lose his faith in the integrity of adults and in the moral codes. It is not at all unusual for parents in conflict to draw the child into the conflict in a deliberate attempt to win him away from the other parent. This often takes the form of revealing all the disloyalties and misdemeanors of the other parent to the immature child who may hold the other parent in high regard. The parent who does this usually is doing it to rationalize his own position, and in the intensity of his emotion he fails to realize the damage being done to the child.

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[9] The social security program, with its aid to dependent children, has helped greatly at this point.

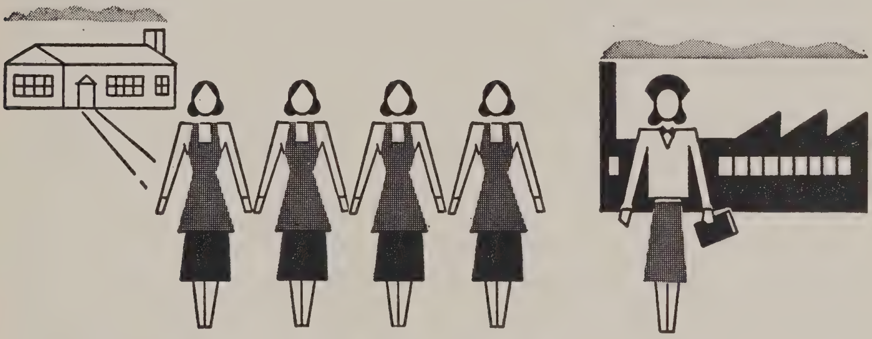

FIG. 23. ONE IN FIVE MOTHERS WORKS OUTSIDE THE HOME.

In the United States in 1949, one of every five mothers with children under eighteen worked outside the home. This often means neglect of children and delinquency. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

The following case is characteristic of many parents in conflict. In this instance the separation did not come until the daughter had married and left home.

> Ever since I can remember my mother and father have argued with each other. When I was a child, I didn't understand and often sat on the back porch and cried while they fought inside the house. As I grew older, I could see that their quarrels were childish, at least my mother's side of the argument. I knew I was still too young to interfere, but the time finally came when I did. If I was on my father's side, my mother would get me in a corner and tell me of his disloyalties to her, the way he beat her when I wasn't around, how he stayed out nights with other women and spent his money gambling and drinking. He was just like all men; none of them were any good as far as my mother was concerned. All this was in an effort to bring me around to her side of the argument and turn me against my father. It was hard for me to believe all of these things because I knew my father was a good man and he had provided well for his family. But since my mother told me about them, they had to be true and I believed. My father never defended himself against these accusations

> and was always good to me whether I was on his side or mother's. I loved my father too much to grow to hate him because of what my mother had told me. Eventually I discovered for myself that all my mother's claims against my father were false. This was fortunate, for had I continued to believe my mother, perhaps my attitude toward men would have become the same as hers and I could have spoiled an otherwise happy marriage of my own because of it.

The careful study of Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck[10] matches delinquent and nondelinquent boys for socioeconomic characteristics, studying their home background and facts of their personality and experience. While this study does not present the final answer to the question of relationships between family patterns and delinquency, its conclusions certainly must be weighed more heavily than those of many studies with less carefully controlled samples.

This study found, with regard to home conditions, that the delinquents were in homes where the families had been more mobile and in homes that had a greater dearth of sanitary facilities, had been more overcrowded and had been kept less tidy. The families of the delinquent group had more often been dependent on relief agencies for support, and their standard of living and income were lower. Delinquents were found to be more often making their homes with people other than their own parents, and to come more often from separated or divorced persons, or from parents who had never been married to each other, or who were no longer living. The study shows that, by and large, the "under-the-roof" conditions of the delinquent youth were worse than those of the nondelinquent youth.

The delinquent youth's family also differed from the nondelinquent in ability or willingness of parents to assume family responsibilities. Parents of delinquents were not only more often on relief but were more often dependent because of the unwillingness of the breadwinner to assume responsibility rather than because of unforeseeable crisis. They were more often afflicted by emotional disturbance, drunkenness, criminality, physical ailments, or mental retardation.

The delinquents' parents differed from the nondelinquents' parents in basic character structure and in the dynamic pattern of parent-child relationships.

Not only did the delinquents more often live with foster parents or stepparents or with relatives, indicating that their original home had been broken, but they were often the victims of indifference or hostility of mothers or fathers and were, as a consequence, less attached to their parents. Often, this pattern of lack of warmth toward family members extended to brothers and sisters. This emotional deprivation led the delinquent boy to feel that his parents were not concerned about his welfare. Consequently, he made little attempt to emulate or respect his parents.

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[10] *Loc. cit.*

In the delinquent home the pattern of discipline was more often erratic. It ranged from extreme physical punishment to great laxity. Also, parents of the delinquents were less consistent and kindly in their disciplinary practices.

The Gluecks conclude:

> It seems clear, therefore, that the delinquent boys, far more than the nondelinquents, grew up in a family atmosphere not conducive to the development of emotionally well-integrated, happy youngsters, conditioned to obedience to legitimate authority.[11]

Truancy. The Gluecks[12] found that truancy was the first and most frequent manifestation of maladjustment among some 708 delinquents who misbehaved in school. Misbehavior in school usually started earlier among the delinquents than among the nondelinquents and was much more frequent.

The Gluecks found also that the delinquents were generally more retarded in school than the nondelinquents, had a greater dislike for school, its restrictions, and its work program. They were more often interested in dropping out of school and less interested in considering going on to high school, trade school, or other specialized forms of education.

Delinquents generally were more interested in activity and less in logical reasoning and persistent effort.

Truancy has been called the kindergarten of delinquency.[13] This is a significant fact that is worthy of some analysis.

1. Lack of desire to attend school by the child is likely to be symptomatic of maladjustments in his relationships with the school, and of a lack of authority in the home. Often in the school relationship there is a failure to learn or inability to learn. In many cases problems of personal relationship between pupil and teacher are basic.

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[11] *Ibid.,* p. 133.

[12] *Ibid.,* Chap. 12.

[13] For an excellent discussion of this problem, see Walter C. Reckless and Mapheus Smith, *Juvenile Delinquency,* McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1932. See also the works of William Healy and his colleagues.

2. Truancy is usually not an individual offense. It immediately brings into question the character of the child's play group.

3. Truancy, as it has been handled by traditional police methods of the school, gives the child the psychological experience of being considered a lawbreaker. Withal this leads to the development of attitudes of conflict, defiance, and deception.

4. If truancy is persisted in, these attitudes of defiance of the school authority may readily come to include defiance of civil authority.

5. The secretive nature of truancy makes certain kinds of petty delinquency easy.

A more social approach to the whole problem of truancy would seem to be the first step in reconstruction. In place of the traditional truant officer must come the case worker who approaches the situation not from a standpoint of punishing the child or forcing conformity to school regulations but who, as a case worker, analyzes the child's home, school, and play-group associations, and attempts to correct the factors that have made him dislike school. In many schools the visiting teacher is a regular staff member, one of whose major functions is to handle the problem of truancy.

Healy and his colleagues believe that to do away with truancy is to take a long step in the direction of doing away with delinquency "because it is so common to find stealing, staying out at nights, and sexual misbehavior associated with truancy." [14]

Frustration as a Factor. In our grandparents' time the older adolescent boy in the rural school was often a major problem. He dominated the younger children, even tried to rule the teacher. In many communities he ran the teacher out. Terrorism sometimes prevailed if the gang of older boys chose to take vengeance on some neighbor they disliked. Breaking up the revival meeting by chasing the evangelist out of the community was a common prank. Even a generation ago in some communities this kind of behavior persisted.

It seems probable that such behavior is indicative of the stagnant experience of youth. The coming of the motion picture, the growth of the high school with its program of extracurricular activities, the interscholastic athletic program with its opportunity for vivid emotional expression and group rapport, all have had a bearing on the reduction of this kind of school problem, as well as a tendency to change the character of youthful pranks.

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[14] William Healy, *et al., Reconstructing Behavior in Youth,* p. 37, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1929.

Destructiveness of property by youth at Halloween and on less celebrated occasions has declined.

Yet, today many rural young people have too few recreational opportunities. For example, a study[15] of 250 youth in a prosperous wheat county of Washington showed that 83 per cent of rural high-school youth felt that recreational opportunities were too few in their community. Asked why, half of these young people mentioned lack of facilities, of suitable meeting places, and of equipment, and almost as many also mentioned lack of understanding by parents and other adults in the community.

Commenting on the problems of frustrated youth, Weaver[16] states that they react either by struggle or by resignation. Strong youth who are denied a chance for work may substitute crime, labor racketeering, or strike breaking; denied marriage and home, they may substitute migration and sexual promiscuity. Less heroic souls submit to dependency and idleness, he believes.

EXTENT OF JUVENILE CRIME

There are no adequate statistics in the field of criminal behavior, particularly in the area of juvenile delinquency. One of the aims of handling modern juveniles is to protect children from being marked as criminals. As a consequence, fingerprints are not usually taken and often no public record of an offense is made.

In spite of this, there is evidence that criminal careers begin early. In 1950, the Federal Bureau of Investigation examined arrest records for 793,671 persons who had violated state and municipal ordinances (their tabulations of fingerprints in this instance did not include violators of Federal laws).[17]

Of this group, 242,369, or 30.5 per cent, were youth (see Fig. 24). The majority of crimes of youth are crimes against property, as the majority of these arrests were for robbery, burglary, larceny, auto theft, embezzlement, forgery, fraud, counterfeiting, receiving stolen property, and arson.

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[15] Carol (Larson) Stone, "Leisure Time Activities of Rural Youth in a Sparsely Settled Wheat County," *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Circular* 58, Pullman, Wash., December, 1947.

[16] W. Wallace Weaver, "Modern Youth—Retrospect and Prospect," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 194:1–5, November, 1937.

[17] Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D.C., "Uniform Crime Reports for the United States and Its Possessions," *Annual Bulletin,* 21:106–109, 1950.

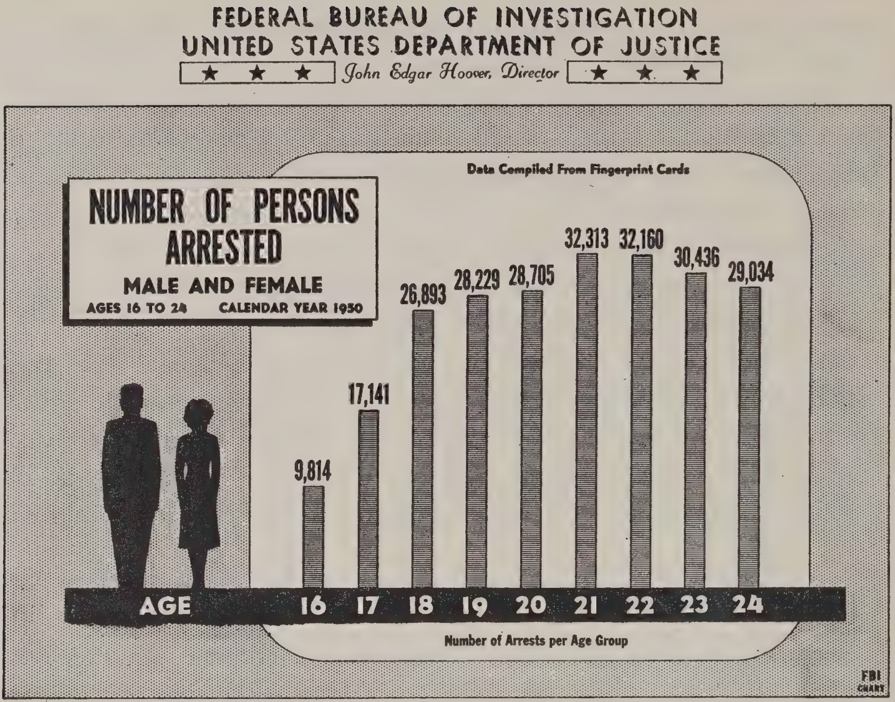

FIG. 24. CRIME CAREERS OFTEN BEGIN IN EARLY YOUTH.

In this study of crime, the FBI found that 30.5 per cent of offenders were under twenty-five years of age. (*Federal Bureau of Investigation.*)

A SUMMARY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS

The Gluecks, after their extensive study of a matched sample of delinquents and nondelinquents, came as near to a generalization concerning the characteristics of delinquents as a group as has yet been done.

They say:[18]

> The delinquents as a group as distinguishable from the nondelinquents: (1) physically, in being essentially mesomorphic in constitution (solid, closely knit, muscular); (2) temperamentally, in being restlessly energetic, impulsive, extroverted, aggressive, destructive (often sadistic)—traits which may be related more or less to the erratic growth pattern and its physiologic correlates or consequences; (3) in attitude, by being hostile, defiant, resentful, suspicious, stubborn, socially assertive, adventurous, unconventional, nonsubmissive to authority; (4) psychologically, in tending to direct and concrete, rather than

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[18] *Op. cit.*, pp. 281–282.

symbolic, intellectual expression, and in being less methodical in their approach to problems; (5) socio-culturally, in having been reared to a far greater extent than the control group in homes of little understanding, affection, stability, or moral fibre by parents usually unfit to be effective guides and protectors or, according to psychoanalytic theory, desirable sources for emulation and the construction of a consistent, well-balanced, and socially normal superego during the early stages of character development. While in individual cases the stresses contributed by any one of the above pressure-areas of dissocial-behavior tendency may adequately account for persistence in delinquency, in general the high probability of delinquency is dependent upon the interplay of the conditions and forces from all these areas.

In the exciting, stimulating, but little-controlled and culturally inconsistent environment of the underprivileged area, such boys readily give expression to their untamed impulses and their self-centered desires by means of various forms of delinquent behavior. Their tendencies toward uninhibited energy-expression are deeply anchored in soma and psyche and in the malformations of character during the first few years of life.

YOUTH AND THE LAW

The American Youth Commission distinguished between conforming citizenship, which is the essence of social control, and contributory citizenship, which implies discharge of obligations of the citizen.

Great leniency is shown in America toward youth who fail in the obligations of conforming citizenship. Even greater leniency of social attitudes toward these youth, who are considered incapable of making political decisions until they are twenty years of age, was recommended by the American Youth Commission. The commission felt that, with all the increase in leniency toward juvenile conduct that has come with the new social philosophy, we still are too quick to punish and too slow to reform.

> A youth who finds himself in difficulty with the law should not be proceeded against as a public enemy; he should be taken in hand and re-educated as a public asset, the state supplying the parental care and discipline which has been lacking.[19]

The commission further sanctioned recommendations of the American Law Institute concerning a vital reform in our system of criminal justice as it deals with young people. The institute proposed that each state create

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 200.

a youth-correction authority [20] to handle the cases of convicted young people above juvenile-court age. The authority would hire social workers, psychologists, and educators who would study the background of youthful criminals and their capacities for improvement and would apply scientific measures for their rehabilitation. Every effort would be made to return them to society. New places of detention for youth who are awaiting trial would be developed so that they would not be thrown into the jails and prisons to associate with experienced criminals.

Following this pattern, the California Youth Authority was actually established in 1941, modeled after a plan developed by the American Law Institute. It was put in operation in 1944.

It gave the Youth Authority the function of administering the juvenile correctional activities of the state. The broad aim of the act was to substitute for retributive punishment methods of training and treatment aimed at the correction and rehabilitation of young persons found guilty of public offenses.

One of its interesting activities has been the establishment of work camps for youth. The Youth Authority worked out contracts with various branches of the state and Federal government to provide work camps for the development of natural and scenic resources in parks, forests, and on beaches. During the Second World War, camps were also established for using juveniles in the growing and harvesting of crops, and in certain phases of manufacturing, in government arsenals, and in ordnance depots.[21]

The Youth Authority seems to be one of the simplest and most effective social inventions developed to date for handling the educational and rehabilitation problems of the youthful offender. In 1947, Minnesota and Wisconsin adopted the Youth Correctional Authority Act; and in May, 1948, Massachusetts did also.[22]

[20] *Ibid.,* p. 300.

[21] For a history of the California Youth Authority and other activities in California, see Lloyd L. Voight, *History of California State Correctional Administration from* 1930 *to* 1948, San Francisco, 1949. See particularly Chap. 4. Also, John R. Ellingston, *Protecting Our Children from Criminal Careers,* Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1948, particularly Chap. 5.

[22] For a discussion of other special types of programs and activities and special institutions for juvenile delinquents, see Chap. 13 of Negley T. Teeters and John Otto Reinemann, *The Challenge of Delinquency,* Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1950.

A CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH TO BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

In too much of our study of pathological conditions among adolescents and youth—strain, mental breakdown, and moral delinquency—we have focused attention upon symptoms of the disease rather than trying to arrive at an understanding of causes. We have mistaken the symptom for the disease and have attempted to cure the symptom rather than remove the cause. Our approach has been comparable to the approach that the medical profession once made to the problem of allergies. Once they were content to salve the rash; now they remove the strawberry, which produces it, from the diet and the rash never appears.

As we have come to understand that juvenile-behavior problems reflect maladjustments of the child in his social relationships rather than innate meanness, we realize that the cure lies primarily not in punishing the child for his failure but in a complete analysis and understanding of the social forces that operate to make him at odds with life. This leads to an attempt to rearrange these social forces as a means to changing his reactions to his environment.

So we approach problems of delinquency not with the technique of clipping the ears of the delinquent youth or making a public example of the delinquent girl by sewing upon her garment the scarlet letter but by tearing down slums and destroying disintegrated communities and by building there decent homes and playgrounds, by substituting for the pool hall and alley supervised recreation in parks and playgrounds. In the place of vandalism which led to destruction in a quest for thrills, we have substituted the athletic program with competitive games which give the child and youth the same thrill of group conflict, the same sense of in-group unity.

The child who obviously suffers in his social relationships becomes the subject for a mental-hygiene approach rather than for punishment or further torture by group isolation produced by ridicule or criticism. In the place of punishment has come guidance for maladjusted children in the school and for the more pathological in the juvenile court, supplemented by the probation system.

It is recognized that these newer approaches are but in their infancy, and the tasks they must accomplish have barely been undertaken, but at least they point in the direction of a better day for guiding the adolescent and youth who are struggling with the problem of attaining an acceptable morality.

Few individuals are made better by punishment, group isolation, or public exposure. The logic of these devices is to warn others, but such warnings are almost always given at the expense of destroying the person who is made an example. The only way an individual is made better is by acquiring new behavior patterns, by reorganization of his values and goals, by substituting new incentives for the old incentives which were responsible for his going in the wrong direction in the first place.

Prior to the days of germ theory, when it was supposed that everything that was wrong with the individual originated in his inward parts, the method of approach to physical pathology was to bleed the individual or in other ways torture or mutilate him to get the evil elements out of his system. Once the germ theory was discovered, the approach to problems of healing became that of removing the conditions in the environment which propagate germs and to remove from the individual's system germs that had entered from external sources. We are beginning to realize, perhaps not fully but certainly more than ever before, that the germs of delinquency and other forms of social pathology among adolescents and youths are in the environment, not in the blood stream, in the social structure, not in the ductless glands.

At all stages in life the person's attitude toward the sources of authority in his environment determines in large measure his satisfactions with his social group. It also has a direct bearing on the sense of harmony that exists within his own personality. The child who is in constant defiance of his parents or teachers is difficult to assimilate in the social group and is likely to have a turbulent inner life. The adolescent who defies moral codes, challenges a reasonable authority, and fails to consider conformity essential is likewise difficult to assimilate in the peer group, to manage in the social institution, and is likely to be a person who lacks a sense of unity in his inner life.

Many times the difficulty in adjustment to the authority pattern is not, however, as we now recognize, the fault of the child, adolescent, or youth. Numerous case studies show clearly that the difficulty is with the inelastic and arbitrary authority pattern in the home or school to which no healthy vigorous individual could be expected to conform. Revolt is his only alternative, as unsatisfactory as this is likely to be.

A proper balance between forces of social regulation and the individual's desire for freedom and expression is rarely achieved to perfection. Social institutions tend to become static, social regulations fixed and inelastic. Adolescents and youths, on the other hand, crave excitement, adventure, and new experience. In too rigid social orders that fail to recognize legitimate needs of young people revolt is likely to be characteristic. This is as true of the home as it is of the neighborhood, community, or state.

The old philosophy of discipline, "Spare the rod and spoil the child," left the adolescent and youth no alternative but to revolt, providing this system of discipline was perpetuated until he reached the years of maturity. We now recognize that the youth's revolt was necessary if he was ever to free himself from unreasonable parental domination. So, also, in nations where the ancient regime has been perpetuated too long and gives too little room for youths to express themselves and make their voices heard, youth movements have been characteristic. Even ancient China has in recent generations had to listen to the voice of educated youths who make demands for certain changes in the ancient order of affairs.

Revolt can, under such circumstances, be stimulating and vitalizing. Nonconformity, when it is deliberately chosen, is a road to status and group respect, especially when many recognize that the old order should be challenged. It is important that a progressive democratic society be willing to listen to the voice of youth; that they be represented in the councils of family, neighborhood, city, and nation. The older generation can sit by and allow youth to debunk the old order or can listen sympathetically to their criticisms and take reasonable steps toward progress. Youths are often wrong in their debunking, but they are sometimes right. But whether right or wrong, the importance of home, school system, or society giving their views consideration cannot be reasonably challenged.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Explain the origin of delinquent tendencies in the child.
2. Show how adult example may have a bearing on the delinquencies of young people.
3. Give proof to show that the character of the community has a direct bearing on juvenile delinquency.
4. Explain the relationship of the broken home to delinquency. What proportion of homes with children in them are broken?
5. Why is divorce especially critical from the viewpoint of the child?
6. Summarize the Gluecks' findings in comparing families of delinquent and nondelinquent boys.
7. Should the school treat truancy lightly? Explain.
8. What new activities have replaced the stagnant social life of adolescents of yesterday? Has this had any bearing on delinquency?

9. Outline the program of the American Youth Commission for dealing with juvenile lawbreakers. Has it been put into effect?

10. Show how our new approach to problems of moral failure has led to a recasting of methods of dealing with juvenile delinquents.

11. Why should we give ear to the complaints and criticisms of young people?

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PART THREE

The Transition to Marital Adulthood

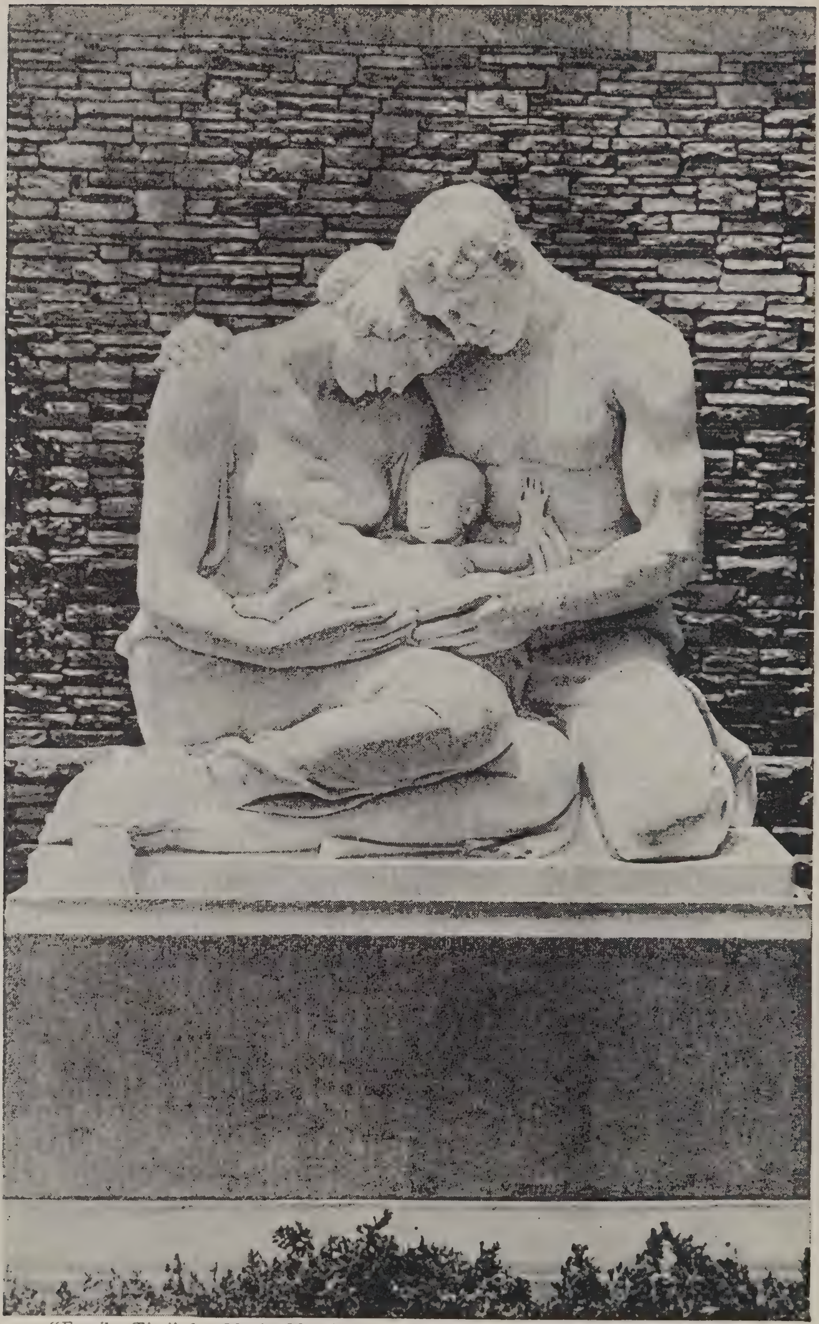
It is a long way from being a child to being a father or mother, from the biological drive of sex to institutionalized mating. The transfer is not well provided for by nature.

The patterns of family carry over into adjustments of the child as he grows into adolescence, youth, and adulthood. In a society in many parts of which one in three or four adolescents and youth are from homes broken by divorce or death and where many more are psychologically disorganized by conflict and dissension, adolescents are ill prepared for the momentous decisions our society forces upon them in the sphere of moral-sexual choices, mate selection and marriage.

Adjustments in the emotional life, the phase of personality to which our society has committed adjustments in marriage, are among the most difficult and unpredictable in human experience. They have proved hazardous in the extreme for modern youth. Because love and marriage are identified in our culture pattern with the goal of supreme happiness, failure is the more tragic, disillusionment the more severe.

Placing on immature adolescents the full responsibility for choices in the field of sex, romance, and mate selection might be questioned by societies that have reserved these decisions for supervising elders, but in America this step has already been taken. But to expect young people to make these decisions without sex education, adequate moral training, and tutorage concerning the nature, responsibilities, and obligations of love, marriage, and family is presumptuous.

In no field have our social institutions been so negligent of the needs of adolescents and youth. In no other field is the need for training so challenging to school, church, and home.



"Family Ties" by Mario Moschi, in Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Glendale, Calif.

CHAPTER 13

The Adolescent and Youth in the Parental Home

FAMILY EMOTIONAL PATTERNS AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

The modern family, in spite of supposed weaknesses, especially in the urban environment, still has more to do with shaping the child's personality to fit group life in our society than any other social group. We have suggested that the child's sense of security, of "belongingness," is a product of intimate contacts with the mother during the first two years of life.[1] Lacking this intimacy of contact, he develops a sense of insecurity which makes him fearful in facing the world. This sense of security, which is a requisite to a sense of belonging in our society where intimate personal attachments are customary,[2] seems, as we have seen, to come primarily from intimacy of personal relationship.[3] If it is not built by the mother in early childhood, it is difficult to build later by any amount of training or counseling.

With parental affection, as with many other things in life, however, the children who suffer are both those who have too little and those who have too much. The parent who gives too much in the way of attention, emotional response, and anxiety to the care of the child develops what is known as the "overprotected" child. The parent who gives too little in the way of emotional response, supervision, and care is responsible for the "rejected" child.

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[1] Chapter 4.

[2] For a brief description of a society where such personal attachments are never cultivated and therefore never missed, refer again to pp. 74–77 or better still refer to Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa,* Chap. 13, William Morrow & Company, Inc., New York, 1928.

[3] For a more adequate discussion of this problem and problems of insecurity resulting, see James S. Plant, *Personality and the Culture Pattern,* Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication. New York, 1937.

Voluntary parenthood at the present period is probably a factor in the attitude of rejection which some mothers have toward some of their children. When women accepted all children as inevitable, they were inclined to rationalize the increased burdens of more children than they wanted as acts of Providence and accept them with an air of resignation rather than of rebellion. As parenthood has come to be voluntary, except as accidents may interfere, an attitude of resentment toward the coming of unnecessary children is likely to be given more free play. Some studies indicate that the rejected child is more common among foreign-born families and in Catholic homes.[4] There may be some logic in these findings. In these homes birth-control devices may not be accessible because of moral taboos or financial difficulties, and yet these mothers recognize that others, because of privilege or because of lack of moral restraints, could have avoided having the child. The result is a bitterness of attitude that affects the mother's emotional relationships with the child.

The overprotective parent is likely to be continually solicitous of the adolescent's welfare, constantly treating him as a child, making decisions for him, directing him in situations where he should be allowed to go on his own, or forcing him into a mold by stern discipline. The underprotective parent is likely to take too much for granted, to assume that the adolescent is capable of going his own way, making no provisions to safeguard his health, morals, or associations. Both extremes, of course, are unfortunate, and the most unfortunate part is that parents in their human way are likely not to know that they represent either group. Certainly the finding of the middle ground is difficult, although a frank, face-to-face talk on the matter with the child himself is likely to throw considerable light on the situation if the parents are willing to be thoughtful and face situations frankly.

The unfortunate thing about parents is that they are human beings and as such are subject to certain frailties. Because of their close identification with the adolescent, they are rarely objective onlookers.

The immature parent often preys upon the sympathy and emotional ties of the adolescent and youth by calling attention to his debts to the parent, trying to get his sympathy and continual allegiance to the home. Such an attitude on the part of the parents creates an awkward situation for the youth. The youth is left with two alternatives, neither of which may be fully satisfactory: (1) to defy the parent, which is probably the more normal course, or (2) to submit and ruin his own future possibilities of happiness and normal transfer to adult status.

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[4] Jessie Bernard, *American Family Behavior,* p. 261, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1942.

Perhaps even more serious are the cases where the youth bears an abnormal attachment to the parent. Although both situations often go together, this is not always true. Such a child may sense an obligation which is largely imaginary and which is primarily for the satisfaction of his own emotional attachments rather than for meeting the needs of the parents. In these cases the development of heterosexual love may be difficult or impossible.

The normal adolescent, however, relaxes his emotional dependence on parents or other family members and seeks close emotional support in the companionship of nonrelated members of the peer group. Often he feels more comfortable with them, for they are going through the same struggles and expect less of him. They are likely to be more tolerant of his reversions to childhood patterns and of his awkward striving toward the values that he hopes to realize in his manhood. In these companionships adolescents air their common conflicts with adults, bare their common ambitions and plans, discuss with their peers problems that are vital to them, analyze others of their play groups or gangs who are absent, pass their own evaluations on the absent member's conduct and adjustments, assist each other in making decisions, standing by each other as they face crises with adults or in other matters of personal decision.

COMMON POINTS OF FRICTION IN PARENT-CHILD RELATIONS

Points of friction between adolescents and parents reflect clearly the experiences and values of our culture.

Virginia Lee Block, Director, Child Guidance Clinic, Seattle, Wash., indicates that in a series of interviews with adolescent boys and girls over a period of five years,[5] it was found that the majority of students reported repeated conflicts between themselves and their mothers. These conflicts they found most disturbing in their life adjustments. From their reports, 50 common items of disagreement were submitted to the pupils; they were asked to check the points that were seriously disturbing them, making them very unhappy in their relationships with their mothers. The instructions read further: "Check only those which are causing you conflicts or which have so disturbed you previously that their effects are still the basis of much unhappiness in your life." Students were given the option as to whether or not they were to sign their names. A total of 528 students checked the list. The percentage of boys and girls checking each item is listed in Tables 12 and 13 derived from the report of this study.

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[5] "Conflicts of Adolescents with Their Mothers," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 32:196–198, July-September, 1937.

TABLE 12. *Percentage of Boys Who Checked Each of* 50 *Items That Were Seriously Disturbing Factors in Their Relationships with Their Mothers* *

1.	Won't let me use the car	85.7
2.	Insists that I eat foods which I dislike but which are good for me	82.4
3.	Scolds if my school marks aren't as high as other people's	82.4
4.	Insists that I tell her for exactly what I spend my money	80.0
5.	Pesters me about my table manners	74.8
6.	Pesters me about my personal manners and habits	68.5
7.	Holds my sister or brother up as a model to me	66.9
8.	Objects to my going automobile riding at night with boys	65.7
9.	Won't let me follow a vocation in which I am interested	64.5
10.	Complains about my hands or neck or fingernails being dirty	55.7
11.	Won't give me a regular allowance	54.1
12.	Teases me about my girl friends	51.3
13.	Insists that I take my sister or brother wherever I go	50.5
14.	Brags about me to other people	50.1
15.	Embarrasses me by telling my friends what a good son I am	49.8
16.	Objects to my going automobile riding during the day with boys	49.0
17.	Makes a huge fuss over friends of mine whom she likes	34.3
18.	Talks baby talk to me	33.4
19.	Won't let me take subjects I want in school	32.9
20.	Insists that I be a goody-goody	32.2
21.	Shows favoritism to my brother or sister	30.6
22.	Makes me go to bed at the same time that my younger brothers and sisters do	30.6
23.	Spends most of her time at bridge parties, etc., and is rarely ever at home	28.7
24.	Gets angry if I don't spend most of my time with her	28.3
25.	Worries about my physical health	26.7
26.	Nags about any little thing	26.3
27.	Insists upon nagging me regarding what I wear and how I dress	26.3
28.	Complains about how I comb my hair	24.3
29.	Insists that I go with friends of her choice	20.3
30.	Insists upon interfering in settling any difficulties I may have with friends and teachers	20.3
31.	Is cold to friends of mine she doesn't like	19.9
32.	Objects to my going with boys or girls she doesn't like	19.1
33.	Objects to the books and magazines I read	17.9
34.	Won't let me spend the night with any of my friends	15.1
35.	Investigates places when I go to parties, etc., before I go	15.1
36.	Tells her friends things about me that I tell her confidentially	13.5

Table 12. (*Continued*)

37. Refuses to let me buy the clothes I like	12.7
38. Urges me to make friends with children of important people in town	9.6
39. Won't let me entertain at home	9.2
40. Talks against my father and wants me to agree with her	8.4
41. Won't ever let me go to the movies or dancing	7.6
42. Treats me as if I were a child	5.2
43. Won't let me attend the church I want to attend	4.4
44. Urges me to beat the next fellow in schoolwork	3.6
45. Accompanies me to parties, movies, etc.	3.2
46. Objects to my smoking	0.8
47. Fusses because I use lipstick	0.0
48. Teases me about my boy friends	0.0
49. Urges me to outdo others socially, which I hate to do	0.0
50. Objects to my going to dances	0.0

* The list of 50 problems was presented to a group of 528 boys and girls; 0.0 items are apparently those which apply to girls primarily and not to boys since they differ in the reports of the two sexes.

Table 13. *Percentage of Girls Who Checked Each of 50 Items That Were Seriously Disturbing Factors in Their Relationships with Their Mothers**

1. Objects to my going automobile riding at night with boys	87.4
2. Scolds if my school marks aren't as high as other people's	85.9
3. Insists that I eat foods which I dislike but which are good for me	83.8
4. Insists that I take my sister or brother wherever I go	82.3
5. Insists that I tell her for exactly what I spend my money	81.2
6. Spends most of her time at bridge parties, etc., and is rarely ever at home	78.0
7. Holds my sister or brother up as a model to me	75.8
8. Won't let me use the car	70.8
9. Pesters me about my personal manners and habits	70.0
10. Insists that I go with friends of her choice	69.7
11. Nags about any little thing	66.4
12. Objects to my going automobile riding during the day with boys	66.4
13. Teases me about my boy friends	65.7
14. Fusses because I use lipstick	64.6
15. Pesters me about my table manners	63.9
16. Worries about my physical health	58.8
17. Objects to my going to dances	58.8
18. Insists that I be a goody-goody	57.8
19. Won't let me take subjects I want in school	56.1
20. Refuses to let me buy the clothes I like	55.6
21. Won't let me attend the church I want to attend	53.4
22. Won't let me entertain at home	53.1
23. Won't give me a regular allowance	52.3
24. Insists upon nagging me regarding what I wear and how I dress	50.9

TABLE 13. (*Continued*)

25. Makes me go to bed at the same time my younger brothers and sisters do	45.1
26. Is cold to friends of mine she doesn't like	45.1
27. Shows favoritism to my brother or sister	44.4
28. Investigates places when I go to parties, etc., before I go	44.4
29. Won't let me spend the night with any of my friends	42.6
30. Objects to my going with boys or girls she doesn't like	40.4
31. Makes a huge fuss over friends of mine whom she likes	36.8
32. Gets angry if I don't spend most of my time with her	34.7
33. Won't let me follow a vocation in which I am interested	34.3
34. Objects to the books and magazines I read	32.5
35. Accompanies me to parties, movies, etc.	30.3
36. Urges me to outdo others socially, which I hate to do	28.2
37. Embarrasses me by telling my friends what a good daughter I am	26.4
38. Complains about how I comb my hair	26.0
39. Insists upon interfering in settling any difficulties I may have with friends or teachers	23.1
40. Brags about me to other people	22.7
41. Talks against my father and wants me to agree with her	16.6
42. Treats me as if I were a child	16.3
43. Tells her friends things about me that I tell her confidentially	16.2
44. Won't ever let me go to the movies or dancing	13.4
45. Objects to my smoking	13.4
46. Urges me to make friends with children of important people in town	13.4
47. Urges me to beat the next fellow in schoolwork	13.0
48. Complains about my hands or neck or fingernails being dirty	10.5
49. Talks baby talk to me	10.5
50. Teases me about my girl friends	0.0

* The list of 50 problems was presented to a group of 528 boys and girls; the 0.0 item is obviously one which applies to boys primarily and not to girls.

It is likely that the amount of disagreement with parents reported depends on the age of the group questioned, the way they are questioned, and the particular questions asked.

The Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People,[6] from a nationwide sample of high-school young people, concludes that generally speaking there is comparatively little clash between the older and the younger generation. They do find, however, that approximately one-fifth of all students report some home problems. Areas where there is a lack of full rapport between parents and youth are illustrated by the following: "I can't discuss things with my parents," 20 per cent say; "I'm afraid to tell my parents when I've done wrong," 19 per cent say; "There is a barrier between me and my parents," 10 per cent say.

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[6] Reported in H. H. Remmers and Lyle M. Spencer, "All Young People Have Problems," *National Education Association Journal,* March, 1950.

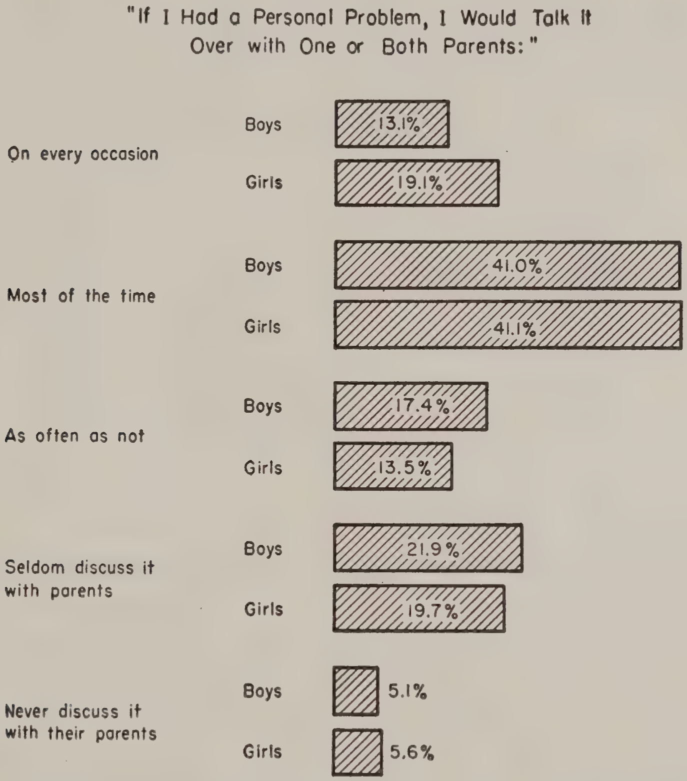

FIG. 25. A MEASURE OF CONFIDENCE BETWEEN TEEN-AGERS AND PARENTS. (*Based on data from L. J. Elias, High School Youth Look at Their Problems, College Bookstore, Washington State College, Pullman, Wash.*, 1949.)

Elias's study[7] of 5,500 high-school seniors in Washington in the spring of 1947 to determine closeness of adolescents and their parents asked with five alternatives to check: "If I had a personal problem, I would talk it over with one or both parents." The proportion checking various alternatives are given in Fig. 25. The majority of both boys and girls would consult with their parents.

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[7] L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems,* The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., January, 1949.

Elias further listed for checking nine areas of serious disagreement with parents. The proportions of boys and girls checking these items are shown in Table 14.

TABLE 14. *Percentage of 5,500 High-school Seniors Who Checked Certain Areas of Serious Disagreement with Their Parents*

Areas of disagreement	Boys	Girls
Spending money	27.8	24.9
Friends	7.6	11.9
Choice of clothes	8.9	9.6
Attitude toward parents	13.9	19.0
Outside activities	19.9	20.0
Schoolwork	26.3	12.4
Future plans	16.9	19.2
Share of work	28.6	29.6
Social life	14.4	15.1

THE PROCESS OF GROWING UP

There is little doubt that the average parent today is better informed concerning his job as a parent than were his grandparents, but even at that, he is probably less prepared to cope with the problems of the adolescent in the family because of the increased complexities of the problem of child rearing induced by a rapidly changing urban industrial, technologically oriented social order. Even the amount of knowledge the average parent has concerning the needs of adolescence and youth may itself be bewildering since the parent often has fears as to the consequences of a given kind of disciplinary action or lack of it. The Lynds in their study[8] of Middletown indicated that "a prevalent mood among Middletown parents is bewilderment, a feeling that their difficulties outrun their best efforts to cope with them."[9]

Some of the case materials they assembled indicated that parents, in spite of the knowledge they obtained through training, study, and consultation with experts, feared they were making mistakes and constantly faced problems that were beyond the knowledge they had been given. There was evidence, too, that many parents realized much that was going on among adolescents but, not knowing what to do about it, turned their backs.

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[8] Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown,* p. 151, Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., New York, 1929.

[9] *Ibid.,* p. 15.

In the gradual shift from family, the natural gulf between the generations is clearly shown in the following account of a college girl:[10]

> My mother sees a big change in me but doesn't say much of it. I'd be afraid to tell her everything. I found I had no one but an older sorority sister to go to. She laughed at me at first. . . . I couldn't go to our housemother or my own mother. They just wouldn't understand.

In spite of the best efforts of parents, the family lacks many desirable qualities as a place in which adolescents and youths can grow to full maturity. Parents almost invariably view the situation from the standpoint of affectionate concern and unwittingly throw protective devices around them which are restrictive. Often, too, they fail to appreciate the adolescent's awkward gestures in attempting to imitate adulthood. "My one great problem is my mother," a college sophomore who had always lived at home commented in her autobiography. "We just can't seem to get along." Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and others of the great family, who are not so constantly with the adolescent as the parents and who are willing to view the situation more objectively, are much more likely to accept and encourage expressions of struggles to attain adulthood. The more distant relatives, feeling that they have less at stake than the parents, are more likely to recognize the awkward gestures of youth for what they are, evidences of attempts to attain adult individuality. They may even flatter the adolescent and encourage him in the struggles, whereas the parent is liable to be humiliated and bothered by them.[11]

Even more important for many adolescents is the opportunity to have experience entirely away from the kinship group, away from all parental solicitude. This opportunity may be provided by a work vacation on a farm, a period in camp, or through opportunities for travel alone or in company with peers. At such times, when the adolescent or youth is entirely under the supervision of others, he is likely to have the first and best opportunity to act like and be accepted as an adult. In such situations for the first time he gets a new looking-glass picture of himself as an accepted member of an adult group. Sometimes work vacations of this kind on the farm, for instance, may be extremely strenuous in that the adolescent is expected to do a full man's work and in the competitive situation tries to keep the pace. It is doubtful that the threat to physical health, unless the period of work is prolonged, is sufficiently serious to the health to offset the supreme advantage of being allowed to sense the full acceptance of an adult role.

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[10] Samuel Haig Jameson, "Adjustment Problems of University Girls because of Parental Patterns," *Sociology and Social Research,* 24:262–271, January-February, 1940; case from p. 270.

[11] For an interesting discussion of this point, see Caroline B. Zachry, *Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence,* p. 296, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1940.

Often a sense of adulthood is encouraged most by accepting the adolescent as an equal in adult situations. Such a case is illustrated in the following account from a student paper in the author's collection:

> When I was twelve years old, my father, who was an ardent hunter and outdoorman, began taking me on hunting and camping trips. I was given a small shotgun, and I still remember the first pheasant I ever shot and the thrill as the dog retrieved it. My dad taught me how to handle a gun, the things to be careful of, safety precautions to take when hunting with a crowd. I became an enthusiastic hunter. My first deer-hunting trip was a real experience. I was the only boy among six men, all friends of my father's. I enjoyed listening to the men sit around at night discussing the prospects of the next day, the big buck which got away that day, and all the other bits of talk that floated around the campfire. The older men took a liking to me and gave me valuable advice on many phases of hunting. It seemed that on all trips of this sort there were a group of grown men and I was the only boy of the crowd. This has played a very great influence on my life. It seems that I have grown up faster, have fitted into an older group rather than one of my own age. I enjoy this very much. It seems to give me a sense of superiority over fellows my own age.

In moral situations, also, recognition of adulthood is important. Confidence and trust by parents are essential in the adolescent-youth period. If the adolescent feels that his parents trust him to do the right thing once he has been taught what is right, he is much more likely to make the standard his own than if checked on and questioned continually regarding it.

Payne cites ten commandments for parents, the substance of which follows:[12]

> 1. You shall not work off your own complexes, inhibitions, and repressions upon your children.
> 2. You shall not continually make them feel inferior but always build up their confidence in themselves.
> 3. You shall lend ear to his explanation before punishment.

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[12] Arthur Frank Payne, *My Parents; Friends or Enemies?* Brewer, Warren & Putnam, New York, 1932.

4. You shall not punish as a result of your own emotions.
5. When correcting or admonishing you shall always say something of a commendatory nature or of disappointment rather than rage or bitterness.
6. You shall not deceive them, for they understand fully.
7. You shall treat each child as an individual person with his own personal faults and failings.
8. You shall discipline them to accept responsibilities, to face realities and truth.
9. You shall discover, explain, and develop the will to succeed in each child.
10. You shall set them a good example.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SIB POSITION TO ADOLESCENT ADJUSTMENTS

By "sib position" we mean one's position in the family of brothers and sisters. Sib position is important to personality development. Take, for example, the brother and sister described in the following account written by the sister. Certainly the dominant patterns and motivations in the life of these two individuals would have been different had Jimmie been born first and Jane last.

> Although honesty, loyalty, truthfulness, cleanliness, and good manners were stressed by my parents, the fact that I was responsible for Jimmie seemed to me to be the first law. Mother would look into my eyes and say, "Jane, I trust you to see that nothing happens to Jimmie." Nothing did if I was around. Because Jimmie was small for his age, and I was unusually tall and well built for mine. I fought his battles for him, cried when he was spanked. I did all his work for him in school, I made excuses for him—in fact, I tried to assume more than my share of the responsibility. For myself, I do not regret the responsibility mother placed on my shoulders. For Jimmie, I do. It was a great misfortune for him and also mother and daddy. He floated through his little-boy days too easily and now he is having a tougher time. Since high school, he has had to assume the responsibility for his actions. He has to do his own schoolwork and take the blame for his conduct, whereas I had always done it. Life has always been a dream, and he is having a difficult time to adjust himself to the world from which we did our best to shield him.

A college boy, analyzing his failure to make satisfactory heterosexual adjustments, explains it by childhood and adolescent relationships with sisters in the home. He writes:

> I have never had a "date" with any girl in my life. This may seem peculiar and class me as a biologically abnormal creature, one who is contrary to the

> laws of nature. It may be so, but I think I can easily explain why my behavior is this way. My father died when I was six years old and left me with a mother and four sisters. I grew up with girls and was attracted only to my mother. I vowed if all girls were like my sisters, I did not want anything to do with them. I think that the only thing that can change this emotional status is to get out of this community and out of the midst of my family. This will force me to find some outlet for my emotions.

Common-sense observation leaves little room for doubt that there is some social significance attached to being the oldest, the youngest, or the intermediate child, being a child with brothers and sisters, or being an only child. The question is, does sib position in our culture bear any relationship to personality traits and to social adjustments so that one can generalize concerning these influences and be guided by them in his handling of the adolescent and youth?

Common observation would seem to verify the fact that the parent may try to hinder the youngest child from attaining maturity more than the oldest child, and there is much folklore to support the view that the youngest child is likely to be babied and spoiled and, therefore, to face more difficulty in making adjustments in adulthood. Similarly, common observation would seem to suggest that the oldest child is more likely to have to face the problem of breaking his way into new situations, pioneering in the initial ventures outside the home, neighborhood, and community, and eventually into adult relationships. He therefore may have to exercise greater force in making his way, whereas the younger children already have the way paved to these outside contacts by the older brother or sister. To the extent that these common-sense observations are valid, it would seem that sib position might affect rather permanently the attack of the child on his environment and the relationships he maintains with social groups.

The oldest child is more likely to have had the experience of exercising authority over younger brothers and sisters and, therefore, to have had experience in exercising dominance and leadership, and to have been accustomed to a position with some degree of prestige and influence in the family situation. The youngest child similarly, by virtue of his lack of age, experience, and physical strength, must make his adjustments on a more docile level and submit to the authority often fixed by the older and stronger brother or sister. Because he comes into a family play group, he is likely to be more sociable than the oldest child.

The first child must not only teach his parents how to be parents, he must teach his parents how an adolescent must be treated and set the pattern for transfer to independent adult status.

Many studies throw significant light on the effect of sib position on certain problems of adolescent-youth adjustment. Some of these findings are briefly summarized below.

The White House Conference report[13] presents the results of findings on the order of birth and personality development. It appears that there is a closer emotional connection between the only child and the parents than among members of other families. In families of more than one child, the closest emotional attachment seems to be with the oldest and youngest and least with the middle children. These data also indicate that a close tie between parents is related to favorable personality adjustment. On the other hand, this study concludes that, in the case of most children, order of birth is not a determining factor in the relationship of parent and child.

It is fairly definitely established that the older child is more often delinquent. An explanation given by Sletto and Chapin is that older children are likely to be a block to delinquent behavior of the younger children, but the oldest child may become delinquent by playing the role of hero to the younger children.[14] It is also a well-established fact that, under our culture pattern, jealousy is a peculiar problem of the oldest child. This would seem to be explained readily by the fact that the first child has the full attention of the family until the baby intrudes on the scene and captures a major share of adult attention.

Hundreds of studies have been made on many other points involved in sib relationships and their effects on personality, temperament, and behavior. Results are often contradictory since every family situation in which there are two or more children is a unique social group in which there is the interaction of children and parents. The fact that sibling position, however, is a field of tremendous importance in understanding the adjustment problems of the adolescent has been most interestingly expressed by Bernard in the following statement:[15]

> If, standing on a crowded street corner, we could see all the adults about us in terms of their sib relationships, we would see not the seemingly independent,

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[13] White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Adolescent in the Family*, pp. 237–243, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1934.

[14] For a discussion of this problem, see Bernard, *op. cit.*, pp. 224–225.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 312. By permission of Harper & Brothers.

> self-resourceful individuals who pass before us, but rebellious little sisters fighting against parental discrimination, resentful little brothers hating older sisters whose superiority in age and maturity frustrated their male egos, jealous older sisters resenting the attention bestowed on little sisters, sisters of all ages envying the privileges of brothers of all ages. Most of us, on becoming closely acquainted with men and women of apparent maturity, have found that in certain aspects of their personalities they are still much under the influence of brother or sister, still smarting under childhood patterns. It does not matter that they are now successful in their own right; they must still convince brother or sister of their success. One man's whole life is spent in achieving goals which his sister unconsciously set for him years ago; he must prove to her that he can do it. One woman's life is shattered because of her ambivalent attitude of hatred and love for a brother who dominated her childhood.

Every adult who is reared in a family with more than one child realizes the significance of sib position to his own personality, for he sees within himself certain traits, animosities, handicaps, or assets that accrued to him because of his unique role in the family among brothers and sisters. It is impossible for any family to rear more than one child and not provide for each a somewhat different environment, simply because the presence of a brother and sister inevitably creates a new kind of social situation.

Where one child is unusually attractive and pleasant and the other lacks these traits of disposition, the one gets all the favorable responses from casual guests and friends of the family. The other suffers from the apparent neglect which guests of the family manifest. This tends to make him irritable and makes him wish to withdraw further from group life, to seek escape and isolation from society. The other child, receiving a favorable response from all social groups, is likely to develop in the direction of wanting to be constantly with people because of his enjoyment of all the processes of social interaction which are a part of this experience. The parents may wonder why the two children have such profoundly different trends of personality development without ever realizing that the home situation, rather than any deep native differences in temperament, is producing the situation through daily experience in the family.

The recognition of sib position in the cultural structure is illustrated historically by the widespread practice of primogeniture under which the oldest child inherits the major responsibilities of the household. Under monarchies the oldest son becomes the prince. In many cultures the oldest son has inherited the family farm or the wealth of the family, or inherited the right to rule the younger children when the elders have passed from the scene. There still survives in American life something of this philosophy. Studies of occupation indicate that the oldest son more frequently than the others takes over the American family farm.[16]

Other studies of the social implications of sib position indicate that social advantages may be closely related to position in the family. Rowntree's famous studies[17] of the poverty cycle among English workingmen indicated that the oldest child was at a disadvantage from the economic and social standpoints. In describing the life cycle of the poor family, Rowntree showed that when the couple married, they were able to get along fairly well until the first child came. After the birth of the first child the struggle with property began and continued in intensity as other children were added, only to be relieved when the oldest child reached an age when he could be forced out into the work world to help suport the family. As the older child added his income to the family, the economic burdens of the household were lightened, and the younger children profited by the advanced standard of living in the home and were the beneficiaries of better diet, better housing, and greater educational opportunity.

This same general cycle has been observed among immigrant families in America and families of native Americans. It has also been quite common among farm families, since the tendency of the average American farm family is to increase land holdings as soon as the oldest child is old enough to help operate the farm.

Interfering with this set of economic forces in our time, of course, is the compulsory schooling of youth until they reach a certain age. One cannot deny, however, that even today among children of the poor, the oldest child is likely to be forced into the work world before he may have satisfied his desire for and need of an education.

THE ONLY CHILD

The problem of the only child has been given a greal deal of study. It was once taken for granted that the only child had a unique problem of social adjustment, that he tended to be a problem child. Recently, however, since child psychology has entered into the training of more educated mothers and since the problem of the only child has been brought to the attention of more intelligent parents, the only child seems to suffer no serious disadvantage compared to other children.

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[16] W. A. Anderson presents data for two generations of farmers in "The Transmission of Farming as an Occupation," *Cornell Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 768, Ithaca, N.Y., October, 1941.

[17] B. Seebohm Rowntree, *Poverty: A Study of Town Life,* Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London, 1902.

A number of factors probably enter into the situation. The only child is much more usual in this generation than in previous generations, and it is possible that society is more tolerant toward some of his idiosyncrasies and problems. It is recognized that in a period of birth control and voluntary parenthood the only child is more often from the home of superior social, cultural, and economic position and in the majority of cases from homes of superior education and ability. In spite of his handicaps, with wise direction he is able to overcome the handicaps of his isolation and make adjustment to his environment.

There is some evidence even yet that his struggle to make an adequate adjustment is more intense than that of others. The fact that he fails in no higher proportion of cases than others may in itself indicate real difficulty of adjustment, since because of his superior advantages he should normally be expected to have far fewer problems of adjustment in childhood, adolescence, youth, and adulthood than the less privileged children of larger families.

ADOLESCENTS IN THE FARM FAMILY

Sanderson, rural sociologist,[18] has indicated that the farm family permits a unity of relationship between father and son not possible in urban areas. Rural sociologists have long assumed that the rural family was more integrated and unified than the urban family. It less frequently ends in divorce. There is a larger number of children, so that the family in itself constitutes a play group, and there is more likely to be a family circle in the traditional sense with family members participating in joint work activity on the farm. The total situation, in other words, appears to be favorable to a close economic, psychological, and social unity.

The White House Conference report[19] on parent-child relationships indicates, as we have seen,[20] that the assumption of the close tie because of this working together may be erroneous. A lack of psychological and emotional unity was found in the farm home as compared with the city home.

[18] Dwight Sanderson, "Rural Family," *Journal of Home Economics,* Vol. 29, April, 1937.

[19] *Op. cit.,* pp. 303–304. For a summary of evidence, see Part I of this report.

[20] *Ibid.,* Chap. 5.

Children of urban parents tended to be more loyal to their parents than children of farm parents, confided in them more frequently, suffered formal punishment less frequently, demonstrated affection more generally.

The committee advanced the hypothesis that the economic tasks that impinge upon the farm home may tend to make parents taskmasters. There are no doubt other reasons entering into this distance between parent and child in the farm situation. Groves[21] describes the violent emotions that farm parents frequently engage in as being a result of their giving vent to such emotions with contrary livestock. The same treatment is carried over to the treatment of children. In the farm community, also, there is less likely to be the restraining influence of neighbors. Farm children less often are able to convince their parents that they should be more lenient, as urban children frequently do. The urban child can cite the example of the more liberal attitudes of other parents, using this as a convincing argument. In the rural community, especially the more isolated community, the neighborhood patterns are likely to be so uniform that there is little variation in parental practice; an arbitrary paternalistic standard of discipline may be the accepted pattern of the entire neighborhood.

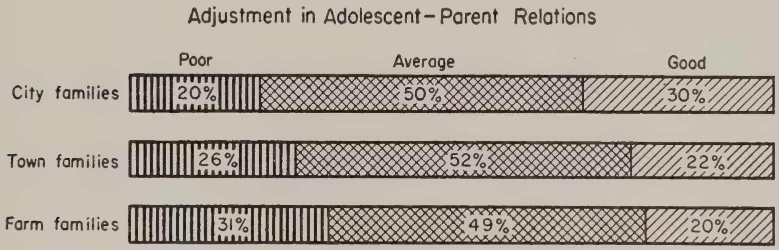

FIG. 26. PARENT–TEEN-AGER ADJUSTMENTS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

Adjustments were poorest in farm families, best in city families. (*Data from Nye, Rural Sociology,* 15:335, *December,* 1950.)

Nye[22] compared a sample of 1,456 city, small-town, and farm families, his sample having been drawn from grades eight and eleven in Michigan schools. He found adjustment between farm families and their adolescent youngsters poorest of the three groups studied (see Fig. 26, above).

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[21] Ernest R. Groves, *The Rural Mind and Social Welfare,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1922.

[22] Ivan Nye, "Adolescent-Parent Adjustment—Rurality as a Variable," *Rural Sociology,* 15:334–399, December, 1950.

The entrance of farm youth into the high school has probably done more to break down patriarchal patterns in the farm home and to divorce youth from parental domination than any other single influence. Many high-school values come to supersede those of the home. The new generation seeks greater freedom; the old hesitates to give it, fearing the demoralization that the new freedom might engender.

CARRY-OVER OF EXPERIENCE OF THE PARENTAL HOME

Influences of the parental home are lifelong in their effects on the adjustments of the child. Satisfactory home life is the key to good adjustment; unsatisfactory home life is likely to carry over into the later adjustments of the child. It is now pretty generally understood that a home situation characterized by conflict and maladjustment of the parents greatly increases problems of attaining sexual and marital maturity for children reared in this home environment. Groves and Blanchard make the following comment:[23]

> In every case which comes to the attention of a psychiatrist, psychologist or social worker because of maladjustment in the field of sex, *unsatisfactory* parent-child relationships are to be found as a fundamental factor.

Thom also states:[24]

> There is perhaps no single factor in the adolescent's environment that is more important than having parents who are well mated and happy in their love life. . . . Children are quick to sense the satisfactions and dissatisfactions which parents get out of their companionship with each other, and it is not surprising that their own future outlook is conditioned by these early experiences.

The White House Conference report,[25] like many other studies, shows that broken homes produce a higher proportion of poorly adjusted children than do unbroken homes. Nonetheless, they point out the fact that frequently children from broken homes have well-adjusted personalities, and children from unbroken homes may make only fair or even poor adjustments. They differentiate between the psychologically broken home and the biologically broken home. It is possible for family members to be so far apart in emotions, sentiments, and basic loyalties that the home is in reality broken, even though the parents live together as a biological family.

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[23] Ernest R. Groves and Phyllis M. Blanchard, *Introduction to Mental Hygiene,* pp. 142–143, Henry Holt and Company, Inc., New York, 1930.

[24] Douglas A. Thom, *Normal Youth and Its Everyday Problems,* pp. 65–66, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1932.

[25] *Op. cit.,* p. 302.

The White House Conference rated 1,957 urban children of native fathers, 941 boys and 1,016 girls, on the basis of 33 indices of home influences. In concluding their findings, they report: [26]

> There is almost no possibility that children from homes which rank low on the scale of home influences will have well-adjusted social and emotional attitudes as measured by the personality test or that they will rank high on the teacher's rating of moral habits.

On the other hand, they found that, among children where home influences rated very high, the chances were extremely high that the child would have good personality adjustments and that he would have desirable moral habits.

The effect of family experience in conditioning the attitude of the child toward marriage and his own future as a mate and homemaker is clearly illustrated in the following case history of a college girl who analyzed the experiences of her childhood and high-school days:

> When I was ten years old my whole character and attitude toward life was changed. One night after I was in bed, I heard my mother and father quarreling, and my mother was crying. They continued for quite a while, and finally I was not able to stand it any longer and went in to stop them. As I opened the door, I saw my father hit my mother, and for the first time fear came to me—fear of men. My mother sent me to bed, but I couldn't sleep all night. I tried to rationalize my father's behavior by saying that he was under the influence of liquor. Although I loved my father, I hated him for this conduct. The next morning my parents tried to act as if nothing had happened, but it was an incident never to be forgotten. Never before had I experienced such fear. I had never been afraid of the dark. I had only been afraid of some punishment that my parents might inflict on me, but I now experienced a fear of older men, and it has stayed with me until this day.
>
> Shortly after this incident, my mother and father got a divorce. I moved to a large urban district with my mother and brother. My mother worked very hard and long, but she was very unhappy and hurt as she was still in love with my father. One night he called up long distance, and she became very excited, but he only asked her about some papers. She cried for several days after that.
>
> We didn't live here long because neither my brother nor myself liked it. We then moved to another rural district which was twelve miles from where

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[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 271–298.

we had lived at first. My mother's and father's divorce was final, and he had married again, a woman sixteen years younger than himself. I rebelled and told myself that I would hate her all my life. I wouldn't even go see my father, although my mother tried to make me. I was jealous and rationalized my thoughts by saying that she had broken up my home.

I soon discovered that people were blaming my mother for my behavior, and so I finally went to see my father and his second wife. I tried to be as nice as I could, but she didn't like me and I didn't like her. My next blow was when I found that she was going to have a baby. This hurt more than anything because I had always had a hope that maybe my mother and dad would some day be reconciled.

Owing to the fact that my mother's beauty shop was a financial failure, she wasn't able to support us, and my brother and I had to go live with my father and stepmother. I was very unhappy there. Returning to my old home and finding another woman taking my mother's place was very hard to bear. Going back to school, I found my role in society a very different one. All my old friends regarded me with a queer attitude. There was only one girl that I had developed a comradeship with in my childhood that stood by me.

I was now approaching the adolescent age and entering high school. I was very sensitive and some older girls' and boys' cool attitude toward me made me feel very hurt. At first I held my head high and put on a bold front. This front was a little too much; I talked too loudly and became quite sarcastic. I didn't want anyone to think they could hurt me.

My home life was also quite trying. I was used to certain habits that my stepmother didn't have. I was used to having a lot of love and affection. I was paid very little attention as my father was too busy to spend much time with me, and my stepmother coolly ignored me except when we had company. I sublimated by putting all my interest in my brother and my girl friend.

I soon found this bold front I was putting on was causing talk and older people were saying I would grow up to be no good; so once again I sought older friends and girl friends who had congenial home lives.

During this age, I palled with boys but rarely went out with them until I was a junior in high school. I was rather afraid of boys because of the incident I had experienced when I was younger. Because I was afraid that the other girls would laugh at me if I never went any place, I began going out with boys and enjoyed myself as long as I could keep them as pals.

While I was working at a curb service in the summer, I met a young man who was five years older than myself. I had a great love for him and thought of him as an ideal person for a mate. We both liked to do the same things, and we had lots of fun together. A few days before school was to take up my mother wrote and begged me to come to California to live with her and her husband. (She had married again.) She wanted me to finish my last year of

> high school with her. I wanted to go very badly but I also didn't want to hurt my father. The same day I got this letter, this boy asked me to marry him. I was afraid, for although I liked him very much, I was afraid of marriage. I ran away from it by going to live with my mother.
>
> In this little rural district in California, I found the environment much different. I had always considered myself as being from a middle-class family. All the students' parents seemed to be retired people, and for the first time I felt competition sharply. I would have to dress better and study harder to keep up with my new friends. I soon found these boys and girls were very friendly, and in a short time I was participating in many events. I was extremely popular with both boys and girls. This was perhaps due to my Nordic resemblance as most of the other people were from the darker races. I was happier there than I have ever been, as I was with my mother who was happily married although she still loved my father.
>
> I went with a lot of different boys in California and had overcome any fear or shyness I had ever felt toward them. I still had a fear of older men. Later my stepfather's father died in Washington and once again I went back to live with my father. I again saw this boy I had loved there and found we both still had the same feelings toward each other. I continued to go with him, and the more I went with him the better I liked him. He was constantly asking me to marry him, and many times I was on the verge of doing it. I never did, because I would stop and think that my mother had been married twice, my father twice, my grandmother three times, and my other grandfather three times. In fact, none of my relations' marriages have been successful. I haven't any desire for a career, as all I want to be is a good housewife and mother. What greater future is there for a girl? Yet I'm afraid of marriage. This boy got a good job in California, and although I am sure that I love him, I will never marry him because he will probably become tired of waiting for me to make up my mind.

Many parents who are engrossed with the problems of obtaining physical necessities or with maintaining continuous cleanliness in the home or with sacrificing to gain material possessions so that their homes will look as well as those of more prosperous neighbors should ponder seriously the conclusions and questions growing out of the White House Conference study.[27]

> The good home is not to be measured, then, in terms merely of necessities, neatness, size, parental conditions, and parental supervision as one scale of home conditions provides. Rather the home is to be defined in terms of human relationships. Does the child have affection and reassurance in the family? Has he secured a satisfying role in family life? Is family life stimulating and enriching?

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[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 300–301.

> Is control in the home based upon full and equal participation in the family council and in familial objectives or does it rest upon formal and arbitrary discipline? Do the relations of husband and wife, of parents and children, and of children with each other promote or impede the personality development of the members of the family?

Studies of marital adjustment, as well as of family disorganization and divorce, also show clearly that marital difficulties of youth and adults in an abnormally high proportion of cases root back to difficult childhood situations where the pattern of conflict was present in the home [28] (see chart below).

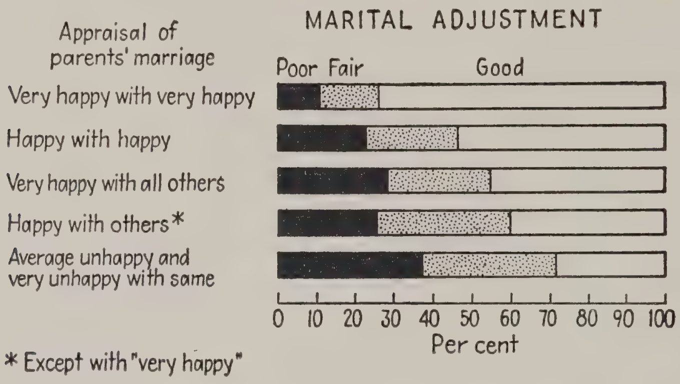

FIG. 27. SUCCESS OF MARITAL ADJUSTMENT AS IT RELATES TO HAPPINESS OF THE PARENTS' MARRIAGE.

The rating is based on the combined appraisal of husband and wife of their parents' marriages. It will be seen that young people who come from happy homes more often succeed in marriage. (*E. W. Burgess and L. C. Cottrell, Jr., Predicting Success or Failure in Marriage, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York,* 1939, *p.* 101.)

Adams [29] also reports, from experience in a family clinic counseling service at Pennsylvania State College, that family background is profoundly important to marital happiness. It is important to know whether the bride and groom have had a happy childhood, whether their parents have got along well together, and whether the children themselves have got along together. He finds that "happiness in marriage runs in families."

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[28] L. M. Terman, *Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness,* Chap. 9, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1938; also, E. W. Burgess and L. C. Cottrell, *Predicting Success or Failure in Marriage,* pp. 98–102, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1939.

[29] Clifford R. Adams, "How to Pick a Mate," *The American Magazine,* December 1944, condensed also in *The Reader's Digest,* 46:19–22, January, 1945.

These data, while they leave little doubt as to the permanently abiding blight of unhappy childhood on adolescent and youth adjustments, are not a cause for despair. They simply call attention to the need for other social institutions to shoulder an increasing part of the burden for directing the increasing number of young people with such family backgrounds. Where the home fails, more responsibility is placed upon the church and school.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. How does the affectional relationship of mother to child affect personality in our society of close personal-emotional attachments?
2. Trace the development of the overprotected child. The rejected child.
3. How may voluntary parenthood affect the mother's emotional response to the child?
4. Show how emotional immaturity of the parent may affect the child's attaining moral maturity.
5. Is it possible for the child's emotional attachments to parent or brothers and sisters to hinder emotional development of a nonfamily, heterosexual character? Explain.
6. What are some of the most common points of friction between parents and children? Do you consider such conflicts inevitable?
7. Do modern parents feel up to the task of guiding their teen-age children? Are their difficulties understandable? Explain.
8. Show how experience outside the family may have a desirable maturing effect on the young person which the family itself cannot give.
9. Which three of Payne's ten commandments do you consider most important? Why?
10. Cite possible advantages or disadvantages of being the oldest child. The youngest.
11. In what sense is the oldest child the pioneer of the family?
12. Which child is more often delinquent? Give possible reasons.
13. Under what conditions may the oldest child suffer from the economic life cycle of the family?
14. Discuss the situation of the only child as it is viewed today.
15. Summarize evidence on the relative difficulty of farm and city youth in achieving freedom from the family.
16. Do experiences in the parental home carry over, or is the youth free of them once he leaves home? Cite evidences.
17. How does experience in a broken home affect success in attaining emotional and marital maturity?
18. Define a "good home" from the standpoint of its preparing the child for the ultimate transition to adulthood.

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CHAPTER 14

Sex in Adolescent-youth Adjustments

SEX DRIVE VERSUS SOCIAL CODES

Throughout much of our discussion we have stressed conflicts growing from the adolescent's adoption of the codes of groups which stand for different patterns of life. In a complex society this is a major source of mental conflict, emotional turmoil, and anxiety. Another field of adjustment which is of basic importance has, however, been recognized. Man is not only a social creature; he is also an animal possessing elemental drives, hungers, and organic urges. No society dares permit animal drives unbridled expression. The restraints of social control are imposed to protect it from the unwanted manifestation of animal impulse and to assure the orderly development of group life toward goals that are conceived to be desirable. No society, therefore, has been free from the problem of achieving conformity of organic drives to social regulations, and few civilized individuals have ever reached maturity without sensing the basic conflict between animal nature and social expectations.

One of the most potent of all organic drives is the sex drive. William Graham Sumner, famed student of cultures and originator of the concept "mores" which has become so important in the field of sociological thought, commenting on the sex urge says:[1] "It may well be believed that if procreation had not been put under the dominion of a great passion, it would have been caused to cease by the burdens it entails."

The adolescent period begins with puberty, which is nothing more or less than the coming to maturity of the physical sexual characteristics and the internal drives that give them force. It is inevitable, therefore, that the period of adolescence will involve the individual in various problems of sexual adjustment in our kind of culture where taboos on sex expression are extremely rigid.

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[1] William G. Sumner, *Folkways,* p. 310, Ginn & Company, Boston, 1906.

The intensity of conflict for each individual depends upon the intensity of his drives, which vary with individuals, and upon the nature of the social controls that exist in his environment.

In every society the group must decide the extent to which animal nature will be recognized in the human being, and the extent to which it will be molded to conform to social definitions. It happens that in our society social definitions having to do with the expression of sex, though changing, are still rather exacting. The conflict between social codes and sex expression is one of the most intense forms of social conflict in the secret life of the individual. The conflict also influences heterosexual contacts, for social codes still hold that sex relations shall be confined to permanent marriage relationships.

The conflict between organic drives and the sex mores is not confined to the adolescent period. It is a lifetime struggle for many individuals in our culture as it has been in many others. Confucius in his writings confessed it was not until he reached the age of seventy that he could do what he chose and yet do no wrong.

Various factors in American society have made the problem of sexual adjustment a major one. In an urban civilization the child has no contact with the natural aspects of man's nature—birth, death, sex, and reproduction. In rural society these processes, as observed in animal life, are taken for granted. Urban children often face the biological realities of man's nature for the first time under conditions of shock.

The existence of relatively free youth groups in high school and college has removed the adolescent from the guiding hands of adults. In the absence of effective sex education, the immature adolescent must make major decisions without adequate knowledge.

The adolescent-youth period is critical in the field of sexual adjustments because it is at this period that the initial ventures in forming emotional attachments to the opposite sex begin. At this period in life puppy love has an important place in the normal development of the personality. It shifts the child's attachments for the first time to an object of consuming desire outside himself. It inspires him to give himself fully to another. This kind of experience, which all men must have as they grow toward heterosexual maturity, is fraught with dangers from the standpoint of sex codes in a society which leaves dating and courtship even in the early years unsupervised.

The adolescent's first love may be intense, consuming, almost overpowering, so violent is the transfer of his emotions to some member of the opposite sex; no doubt its intensity is in part a matter of lack of experience. Although it is true that many adolescents, girls especially, have numerous emotional experiences with members of the opposite sex, often with adults, from early childhood up to adolescence, they are rarely reciprocated and are usually secret affairs that find no concerted direction as they tend to do in adolescence. Certainly they receive no social approval such as they receive in adolescence.

As one has experience in love-making, he learns to release his emotions fully only in situations where he is sure they will be returned. With increasing age and experience, complete release of emotions to another is always accompanied by a caution lest one be hurt by the lack of reciprocation of the emotional experience.

COEDUCATION AND HETEROSEXUAL ADJUSTMENT

The reticent, backward boy, even though he has strong desires for forming associations with the opposite sex, may feel too awkward or ill at ease to do so and may express his attraction in disdain and contempt, building strong allegiance to members of his own sex. Girls may protest against the idea of marriage but are less likely openly to express contempt for the opposite sex. Both sexes may replace normal associations with exaggerated dreams of exploitation of the opposite sex.

Fortunately, today most young people throughout their childhood and early adolescence and on into youth associate with members of the opposite sex as equals. In many situations, most of them nonromantic in character, this background of common education and common interests provides a natural basis for conversation which in the final analysis is the medium of most love-making and of heterosexual pair relationships.

The modern school with its coeducational plan offers normal work and play situations in which the sexes, even though differentiated and in a sense isolated from each other's more secret world of values and tokens, can participate with a degree of equality and naturalness. It seems likely that the modern high school and college have done more than any other institutions in modern life to disillusion our society concerning the inherent differences of sex as such. The oversheltered girl, protected from athletic exertions, is a relic of the nineties. She would have been unable to survive in the modern school system which encourages athletic participation for female as well as male.

Many of the old myths concerning the weaknesses of the female sex, their mental or physical incompetence, their inability to compete in work and play situations, have vanished as young people of both sexes have mingled in competitive work and play situations of the modern school system. Coeducation has, by its subtle attack on many of these old myths that have supported male superiority, probably done more to achieve a true democracy among men and women, a true equality of responsibility, than the woman-suffrage movement itself. Moreover, the school system, in providing a natural atmosphere for association between the sexes, has no doubt gone a long way in the direction of saving youth from the presumably dangerous tendencies toward homosexual development that are implied in the failure of the youth to make a normal transfer of affection and interest to a member of the opposite sex. The approach of our society to a greater similarity in male and female roles would seem, then, to have been a gain from the standpoint of making easier the transition to normal heterosexual associations at the period of adolescence.

SEX ROLES AND PROBLEMS OF ADJUSTMENT

One of the problems of maintaining clear-cut distinctions in moral behavior and also in the attainment of moral maturity by both young men and women, but particularly by young women, is the rapid shift in roles of the sexes, especially in the roles of women.

The male role has always been considered the favored one in our culture, but it was not until a generation or so ago that women began to strive for many of the presumed advantages that the male role brought. In their struggles for equality with the male, they have gone a long way in many instances in imitating male behavior and taking over male vices. As a consequence, the approach toward a single standard of morality has too often been achieved by women adopting men's morality, rather than by men adopting theirs.

A poll made in June, 1947, of men's and women's attitudes toward the preferred role indicated clearly that more than a fourth of women still think the man's role is preferable. The questions asked are as follows:

> "If you could be born over again, would you rather be a man or a woman?" (United States)
>
> "If you had your choice, which would you rather be—a man or a woman?" (Canada)

The results are shown in Table 15.

TABLE 15. *Percentage of Men's and Women's Attitudes toward Preferred Sex Role* *

Group attitude	A man	A woman	No preference	Undecided
United States:				
Men think	92	3	2	3
Women think	25	66	2	7
Canada:				
Men think	80	6	9	5
Women think	29	60	8	3

* *Opinion News*, Vol. VIII, No. 13, National Opinion Research Center, University of Denver, Denver 10, Colo., June 24, 1947.

In seeking to be men in privilege, while clinging to the agelong protections accorded women as the presumed weaker sex, women today often find themselves in contradictory roles. And at times they become deeply involved in emotional turmoil in attempting to reconcile overt behavior with the deep-seated moral training that is still more likely to be a heritage of women than of men in our culture.

POINTS OF STRESS IN BOY-GIRL RELATIONSHIPS

Boy-girl relationships of a highly emotional nature begin in the years of early adolescence and continue through the years of youth until marriage. In a day of unchaperoned pair associations, beginning often as early as the seventh grade, the problem of personal choice is thrust upon every adolescent.

The kind of choices he makes and the moral behavior he develops depend a great deal on the standards given him by family and school, as well as upon the particular values that characterize the peer group itself. At this stage, peer-group pressures are certainly the ones of which adolescents are most aware.

In Table 16 the proportion of boys and girls marking a check list of items is indicated. These tabulations are the results of a survey of some 5,500 high-school seniors, made in the state of Washington in the spring of 1947.

TABLE 16. *Percentage of 5,500 High-school Seniors Who Checked Certain Problems in Boy-Girl Relationships* *

Problem in boy-girl relationship	Boys	Girls
What makes a good marriage	13.9	32.6
Making a successful marriage	9.1	25.5
Going steady	12.9	13.3
Can't date the right person	12.7	12.5
Not enough "dates"	11.5	11.6
Break with (girl, boy) friend	9.0	13.4
How much intimacy to permit	6.9	14.7
Getting along with other sex	12.2	9.5
Not having (girl, boy) friend	9.0	8.4
Understanding about love	4.4	10.5
Should I get engaged	3.1	11.5
Not attractive to other sex	7.8	7.5
Right attitude about sex	7.9	7.3
Insufficient sex knowledge	7.6	6.9
"Going too far"	8.5	5.9
Sex problems	7.6	6.5
Uncomfortable with other sex	8.9	5.2
Wonder if anybody will want me	5.1	7.6
Learning about sex	6.4	6.4
(Girls, Boys) on mind too much	7.5	5.2
Concerned about sex disease	6.4	4.1
"Necking, smooching"	4.8	5.4
Proper sex relations	4.9	5.2
Trouble over sex relations	5.5	4.3
"Petting"	3.5	3.9
Thinking too much about sex	5.9	1.6
Embarrassed about sex	2.8	3.6
(Boy, Girl) friend stepping out	3.8	2.2
Can't keep (boy, girl) friend	3.1	2.7
Too many "dates"	3.1	2.5
Self-abuse, masturbation	4.8	0.8
Not able to get married soon	1.8	2.7
Can't control sex desire	3.3	1.2
Quitting school to get married	0.3	0.7

* L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems*, The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., January, 1949.

It will be seen that the major concern is about what makes a good marriage, which would indicate that even at the senior-high-school age young people are more concerned about the long-term consequences of their relationships with the opposite sex than with the immediate problems.

As one goes down the list he sees that varying percentages are concerned with each of the various problems of contact with the other sex involved in normal dating and courtship relationships.

Masturbation and the ability to control sex desire, thinking too much about sex, trouble over sex relations, and venereal disease are checked much more frequently by boys than by girls. On the other hand, the girls are more often troubled about the problem of necking, "smooching," and what constitutes proper sex relations. They are also much more concerned about understanding about love, about whether or not to get engaged, and are much more concerned about what constitutes a good and successful marriage.

It would seem from this that girls have greater control over physical desire, and also that they are looking further ahead in this field of relationships between the sexes. This bears out traditional views on the subject, that is, that men are more likely to be motivated by impulse and biological desire; girls are more likely to be interested in establishing permanent pair relationships that will ultimately lead to successful marriage and a home.

This difference in attitude probably explains in a considerable part why the girl has to be the custodian of traditions of chastity and why she tends to determine how far each dating relationship will go. Perhaps there are biological reasons why girls are more able to appraise the present moment in terms of its consequences in the future than are boys; perhaps the difference is entirely a matter of tradition; perhaps both elements enter. The significant fact remains that the difference seems to exist in the behavior patterns of young people.

THE EMERGENCE OF STANDARDS IN THE PEER GROUP

With adolescence comes not only the natural desire to attract the attention of the opposite sex but also the initial stages of social approval for heterosexual associations. Parents often try to delay the time of dating, wishing to retard the child's interest in members of the opposite sex as subjects of love and romance, fearing that puppy love will interfere with school progress or normal work and play activities. Today many also fear the love code of the peer group.

The initial stages of association with the opposite sex are likely to be disturbing to the adolescent in that the dating relationship is new and all the behavior patterns that go with it have to be acquired. It matters not how much the parties concerned have associated in normal play activities as children; the situation is different when the love motive enters the picture. This new experience of dating creates in both a new social consciousness and a new self-consciousness. For the first time the boy begins to think of himself as a man. The girl begins seriously to imagine herself for the first time in some of the roles of a woman.

Social training in our society, which makes no provisions for adolescent rites and ceremonials, gives to the adolescent little specific idea as to how he is to conduct himself in these initial stages of pair association. The patterns and ideals absorbed in the home and schoolroom are likely to conflict rather definitely with the romantic pattern of associations so frequently presented on the motion-picture screen.

From this confusion of background and the accepted notions of the adolescent group itself, the young person must, through trial and error, work out, perhaps with considerable awkwardness and embarrassment, the patterns of association that are essential in the new pair relationship. The girl who has an older sister may have the advantage, since the older sister is more likely to have a concept of the accepted behavior of the peer group than is the mother. She is often a wiser counselor because she knows the halfway point between the conservative extreme of the older generation and the perhaps too liberal extreme of the younger generation.

Many of the definitions of what is expected in the association of the sexes in the early stage of adolescence are a product of the relatively independent adolescent group itself. The public-school system, by throwing a large group of similar ages together into a relatively independent and self-directed group, provides an ideal situation in which adolescents may develop their own standards and ideals of conduct without too much regard for the standards and ideals of the adult group. Unfortunately, in many adolescent groups the more aggressive and less conforming adolescents provide the focus of leadership and set the pattern for the more passive and submissive members. Often the leader in the adolescent group is the more precocious, adult-minded individual who assumes many of the prerogatives of adulthood before the adult community is willing to grant them. These leaders frequently succeed in imposing their patterns on a majority of the peer group regardless of whether the patterns are accepted as moral and proper by the adult generation.

THE IDEAL OF CHASTITY AND YOUTH'S MORAL STRUGGLES

In early American society the acceptance of the code of sex purity as the theoretically desired goal was taken for granted. For a period of at least a generation, dating back to the First World War, society has been diverging from this code. The theoretical ideal is still maintained by the adult generation, although studies of the present parent generation make very clear that a considerable proportion of both fathers and mothers did not remain true to the ideal in their own youth.[2]

Studies of premarital sex experience make it clear that, over the past two or three generations, there has been a consistently progressive departing from the ideal of chastity.[3] This greater tolerance in the mores, combined with the greater freedom of the youth group from supervision, places the choice of maintaining chastity upon the shoulders of the adolescent-youth generation more fully than at any previous time in American history.

There is little doubt that the average youth of today by the time he is twenty has made more decisions in regard to this matter of chastity and faced more moral tests than the grandparent generation did in a lifetime. For those who worry about the lack of chastity among youth, there may be some comfort in the statement that there is a surprising amount of it when one considers the confusion in adult values and the lack of clarity in existing sex mores. It is a certain fact that such purity as survives, and there is a great deal of it, survives because of deliberate choice on the part of many youth rather than because of any allegiance to a rigid code of established morality.

Morality of modern youth is a rationalized, intelligent morality, or at least it is much more likely to be than was the morality of their fathers who acquired morality through a more or less unconscious acceptance of mores which were taken for granted by the entire community.

The recent modification of community sex mores, in addition to throwing great responsibility on the shoulders of adolescents and youth for making moral decisions, creates for them many problems of adjustment in personal relations.

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[2] Katherine B. Davis, *Factors in the Sex Life of Twenty-two Hundred Women,* Harper & Brothers, New York, 1929; also, E. W. Burgess and L. C. Cottrell, Jr., *Predicting Success or Failure in Marriage,* Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1939; also, L. M. Terman, *Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness,* McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1938; also, G. V. Hamilton and Kenneth MacGowan, *What Is Wrong with Marriage?* Chaps. 13 and 14, Albert & Charles Boni, Inc., New York, 1929.

[3] *Ibid.*

In the scheme of pair relations, there is no strict code by which all abide regarding the degree of intimacy that is discreet, wise, and acceptable. Every pair relationship becomes a struggle, subtle or sometimes overt, between the codes and standards of the two members of the pair. Every new date involves the speculative element as to what moral code will prevail in the behavior of the other party. This is more true of city dating than of rural dating, where a uniform code is more likely to prevail in the neighborhood, but even in rural dating complexities of standards enter as farm youths date with town and village youths and as various social classes intermingle in the pair relationship.

The new sex code has placed upon the girl most of the responsibilities for chastity in pair associations. With the mobility of modern life, she no longer has the protection of community supervision. She no longer has the protection of the code of the gentleman, which was supposed to regard certain rights and virtues of womankind.

The enforcement of the moral code is largely in her hands, and in the pair relationship most every girl has somewhere in her experience of dating had to be prepared to ward off direct sexual advances or to submit to sex advances. If she accepts without question the ideal of purity, there is the problem of maintaining adequate defenses in new dating relationships. This situation places the adolescent girl in a position that causes anxiety and in some cases fear. In established communities where play group, school, and community activities have been sufficiently stable so that each young person has a reputation, dating can be selective and reputation is a sufficient guard to ward off sex proposals, but an increasing number of youth now date in social situations where mobility and anonymity make any date a prospective struggle of moral standards.

Vociferous arguments concerning the double standard are heard. Although they apply to many phases of behavior, the problem of equality with regard to sex behavior is the core of these arguments. But the gradual approach to a single standard has been achieved not by the male's developing a greater regard for chastity but rather by the female's developing a greater disregard for it.

A purely rationalistic approach to the problem would seem to lead one to the conclusion that no single code of morality is possible in a society which puts a taboo on illegitimacy and which places the illegitimate child in a disadvantageous social position. Morality, from a purely rationalistic standpoint, is a series of protective devices by which society shields itself from a disintegrating tendency. The implications of sex delinquency for the boy are never the same to society as sex delinquencies of the girl. If one considers the ultimate consequences, sex morality, even with the most efficient practice of birth control, can never be entirely free of risks of pregnancy. Sex delinquency outside marriage runs even greater risks because of the secretive and often awkward conditions that surround it. The double code of morality has a basis in social responsibility resulting from the biological risk involved in illicit sex relations.

Unless we are willing to remove entirely the stigma that now exists against the illegitimate child and its mother, accepting the child with full social equality and providing adequately for the child's support and normal nurture, it is a little shortsighted and foolish to talk of a single code of sex morality.

Adults who accept the philosophy of the desirability of a single code should recognize fully the responsibilities which they are placing on youth, providing youth accepts the code. Like many other social changes that may be idealistically desirable, until the whole pattern of social morality can be modified, a single standard is dangerous.

In the midst of this complication of moral standards, young people are forced to make decisions with regard to questions of chastity not only in their own personal lives but, sometimes even more significantly, in the lives of those whom they wish to marry.

Among college students the standard of premarital chastity is still the dominant one held by both men and women, as Table 17 shows clearly. Both men and women in the samples from two universities indicate that premarital sex relations for neither is their approved standard. Even after engagement comparatively few approve of premarital sex relations.

We know from Kinsey's studies[4] that premarital sex experience is much more common among those of lower educational attainments than among those in college. So we must assume that the standards of premarital chastity reflected in these studies are much higher than those which prevail in the population at large.

[4] Alfred M. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1948.

TABLE 17. *Percentages of Students* (2,000 *Michigan State College Students in* 1947, 173 *Cornell University Students,* 1940–1941) *Who Checked Each of Four Statements Representing Attitudes on Premarital Sex Standards* *

Approved standard on sexual relations	Men		Women		Both	
	Michigan State College	Cornell	Michigan State College	Cornell	Michigan State College	Cornell
For both	16	15	2	6	12	9
None for either . . .	59	49	76	76	63	65
For men only	10	23	15	11	12	16
Between engaged persons only	15	11	7	6	13	8

* Adapted from Judson T. Landis and Mary G. Landis, *Building a Successful Marriage*, p. 121, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1948.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Why does conflict centering about sex drives exist in our society?
2. Has coeducation made relationships between the sexes seem more normal and natural or the opposite? Explain.
3. How has coeducation affected our ideas of sex differentiation?
4. Show how sex roles as defined by our culture may affect problems of sexual morality.
5. How may dating heighten sex consciousness? Cite specific problems in boy-girl relationships.
6. How does the free association of the sexes affect problems of moral decision in the area of sex?
7. Explain how the lack of clarity of sex mores affects decisions of adolescents and youths.
8. Discuss the ideal of a single standard of morality. Can it be defended?
9. On whose shoulders does responsibility for observing the code of sex purity fall?
10. How have conflicting practices in the field of chastity affected problems of mate selection?

11. Compare changes in attitudes toward sex that emerged during the First World War and the Second World War.

12. Summarize evidence showing that premarital chastity is still the standard of young people.

For Selected References see end of next chapter.

CHAPTER 15

Sex Education

ARGUMENTS AGAINST PREMARITAL SEXUAL EXPERIENCE

Some societies have, by custom, approved premarital sexual intercourse. Ours does not. Perhaps this is the strongest argument that exists against premarital sexual relations. But many feel that they can defy custom and survive. Are there logical arguments against premarital sexual intercourse that justify chastity within the frame of reference of our marriage-family system?

There are, and while these arguments should not be preached at youth, there are occasions when they need to be presented, particularly to those who are trying to reason out a practical philosophy of life and conduct for themselves. And as we have observed, youth today must arrive at a workable philosophy in the field of sex problems or become a victim of their own organic drives, for, unlike earlier generations, in this age of mobility and anonymity most young people have to face the issue of whether to have or not to have premarital sexual experience. Often they must decide the question in highly tense emotional situations in which they are struggling desperately to control their own natural biological desires. It is important, therefore, that every adolescent be equipped with some knowledge of the biological and social risks he takes in such a situation.

There is no question that premarital sex experience is much more frequent than in recent generations and that the attitudes of the peer group are more tolerant toward it than in previous generations. On the other hand, there are still very important risks. On the biological side, these risks are principally two:

1. Venereal disease is still an important factor in promiscuity. This is hardly an adequate control for the average young couple who are engaged and have serious intent to marry.

2. Fear of pregnancy has also been reduced somewhat by the relatively great effectiveness of birth control. On the other hand, the high ratio of abortions among unmarried youth raises a considerable question as to the effectiveness of birth-control methods as practiced in the secretive situations in which premarital sex experience must take place. From the standpoint of the girl, this should still prove to be a major control device.

A study of 200 couples who had a child under one year of age at Michigan State College showed that two-thirds of them had not planned to have the baby born to their marriage. One-third had actually planned their baby; one-third admitted carelessness in their use of birth control; and the other third were conscientiously making the best use of birth-control methods.[1]

From the standpoint of social effects, there are these risks:

1. Premarital sex experience, because of the unsatisfactory situations in which it takes place, may create an awkward relationship between any couple, even an engaged couple, destroying the finer sentiments on which their romance is built. It is extremely difficult under such circumstances to realize complete and satisfying sex experience.

2. There is always the risk that one or the other member of the pair may, because of circumstances surrounding the premarital sex experience or for other reasons, lose interest in the match. More than one in three engagements breaks rather than consummates in marriage.

3. Society still values chastity. This is a fact that no young person can escape, especially no young woman. As long as society does have these attitudes, it is extremely difficult to engage in premarital sex experience without possessing guilt feelings and involving oneself in mental arguments which are the result of these social pressures. This guilt feeling is much more likely to bother the girl than the boy because of the different value that society places on chastity for male and female.

4. In this matter, as in many other matters, youth must be taught to take the long look. Habits of promiscuity persist and are likely to affect marriage. Feelings of guilt are also likely to carry over into marriage. Probably the greatest risk of premarital sex experience is its risk to adjustment in marriage.

Nature is not interested in happiness—only in propagation. Man is endowed with biological urges which drive him to consummate sexual intercourse and produce offspring. But in society, the unbridled yielding to impulse always brings disaster. Human society is based upon the philosophy of restraint, putting off present pleasures for future gain, sacrificing the moment for the distant goals and ideals that man has been able to achieve through the use of reasoning, foresight, and planning.

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[1] Judson T. Landis, *Proceedings of the Conference on Campus Marriages,* Young Men's Christian Association, Champaign, Ill., May 5, 1949.

MASTURBATION

Students of the sex life of man indicate that masturbation is a normal and nearly universal pattern in one form or another among both sexes, probably more universal in the male sex in adolescence than in the female. It is recognized to be normal in that it is natural and as such a harmless accompaniment of growing sexual maturity.[2]

Its danger to satisfactory marital and emotional adjustments lies in its continuation when the period for normal transfer to heterosexual relationships is desirable. Its danger to personality is in its introverted nature and in the sense of guilt which in our society so often accompanies it.

The extremely secretive nature of sex problems in our culture, combined with the existing taboos, makes for a guilt complex partly because the problem finds no social expression through discussion with counselors or parents who would be able to alleviate the abnormal fears and give guidance. At this point the conflict between organic drives and social codes is most severe in the whole range of adolescent experience.

There is perhaps some logical justification for the Freudian psychologists' insistence upon the conflict between sex drives and social codes as being a focal point of neurotic disorders. In our kind of culture it seems logical that this point of view would have some credence.

The problem is difficult to handle either at home or in school. It must always be approached indirectly through the broader phases of sex education rather than by a direct approach which would only shock and lead to greater secretiveness.

The normality of the practice of masturbation is recognized by biologists and psychologists. The idea of the past generation was to consider such manifestations pathological, threatening to health, to sanity, to proper physiological development, etc. That this approach made more neurotics and misfits in marriage than any physical practices in themselves could possibly do is now generally recognized.

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[2] Havelock Ellis, *Psychology of Sex,* Emerson Books, Inc., New York, 1938; also, his "Perversions in Childhood and Adolescence," pp. 533–553 in V. F. Calverton and Samuel D. Schmalhausen, *The New Generation,* Citadel Press, New York, 1930. See also Alfred Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male,* W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1948.

The common struggles of adolescents with this problem is interestingly presented by Zachry.[3]

> If he has focused upon masturbation much of the anxiety that he feels about his sexuality in general, he may go through a ritual of argument with himself as to his ability to control it. He experiences a phase of believing he can do so, followed by a phase of feeling sure he cannot. The more repressed his feelings are and the more secret his struggle, the more likely he is to feel a compulsion to repeat the masturbatory experience. In recognition, supported by cultural taboos, that it is his body that is making the trouble, he may see this as profane and attempt to mortify it through various means of self-denial more or less rigorous. Or he may seek to punish himself in less direct ways.

A class of boys in hygiene in a city high school was asked to write anonymously and frankly about problems discussed in the course. Most of them listed some question about masturbation. It was obvious that many feared expressions of the male sexual impulse as manifested in masturbation, seminal emissions, and erotic fantasy. Many, also, were troubled by fears of punishment by physical diseases.

> In anxiety about normal experiences of masturbation, seminal emission, and erotic fantasy, many had come to fear expression of male sexual impulses, expecting punishment in the form of acne, venereal disease, generally run-down physical condition. Feeling unworthy as boys in these experiences, they were in some uncertainty over their appropriate future role as men.[4]

FORMAL SEX EDUCATION

Sex education is an essential phase of learning; this is a well-established fact. Where, when, and by whom it should be given is one of those never-ending topics of controversy. No doubt much of it should be given by the family. Often it is not. The amount of instruction that can be given in the grades and in the high school depends a great deal upon the approach of the teacher and the situation.

Young people have a vivid consciousness of their need for sex education in this generation. In narrative reports college students are more critical of their parents' failure to give adequate sex education than in any other item of parent-child relations.[5]

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[3] Caroline B. Zachry, *Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence,* p. 213, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1940.

[4] *Ibid.,* pp. 106–107.

According to an early White House Conference report, the lack of adequate vocabulary is one of the important handicaps to sex education for many parents. They do not know the scientific vocabulary, and no decent folk vocabulary is available; there are only the scientific terms and obscene terms. If the parents know only the terms that have been connected with obscenity, it is extremely difficult to approach the problem with children. Often they approach it by vague hints concerning the danger of sex to health, morals, or religion and build up abnormal fears or stimulate abnormal curiosity. The session where sex education is attempted may prove to be extremely embarrassing for both the parent and the youth.

This committee reported that the three important functions of adequate sex education are:

1. To impart accurate information about sex as a part of the process of normal living.
2. To establish attitudes which will guide the boy or girl in activities with the opposite sex.
3. To provide for the boy or girl an adult who is ready to counsel him when advice is needed.

In the absence of adequate sex education in the home, the youth must pick up his sex education from older brothers and sisters, members of the peer group, magazines, books, teachers, or other adults.

Table 18 gives the sources of *most* sex information, as reported [6] on a check list of five choices presented to 5,500 high-school seniors in the state of Washington.

Almost twice as many girls as boys received most of their sex information from parents and adults in the home. Half the boys received most of their sex information from other "kids," magazines, and movies. A fourth of the girls also received most of their sex information from this source.

It is an interesting commentary on the schools that only a little over 10 per cent of the boys and a little over 20 per cent of the girls received most of their sex information in the classroom.

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[5] White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Adolescent in the Family,* pp. 202–209, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1934.

[6] L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems,* p. 29, The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., January, 1949.

Table 18. *Source of Most Sex Information for 5,500 High-school Seniors*

Source of information	Boys, per cent	Girls, per cent
Parents and adults at home	38.2	64.6
Church, Sunday school minister	3.2	2.5
Older kids, magazines, movies	52.3	26.7
Class and supervised discussion	10.5	20.8
An adult counselor	8.7	6.4

The American Youth Commission's study of more than 13,500 Maryland youths [7] showed that most sex education of both boys and girls comes from the peer group rather than from parents. Less than 25 per cent of white male youths admitted that parents had been the chief source of sex education, whereas almost 80 per cent claimed their chief source of sex education was their contemporaries, which usually means receiving it on the street or in quite realistic situations. Of the white girls over 55 per cent cited parents as the chief source of sex education and 45 per cent contemporaries. Negro youths more often than white youths depend on contemporaries for sex information.

The nature of the comments of young people are as revealing as the data. The following comments are taken from the commission's report:

> "I got it out in the street."
>
> "Just from different talk around. My mother never would tell me anything."
>
> "I've had a car since I was sixteen, so you know what that is."
>
> "Bull sessions."
>
> "From the gang I hang with."
>
> "In the gutter, where everybody else gets theirs."
>
> "I learned by experience."
>
> "On the street corner."
>
> "In Girl Scouts we used to try to find out things, and the leader would look prissy and say 'A Girl Scout is clean in thought, word, and deed.' That's not right. That's why people learn in bad ways."
>
> "I got an earful here and an earful there."
>
> "My mother is one of those old-timers who believe in letting you find things out for yourself."
>
> "Out of the gutter. My mother is the most innocent person you ever saw."

[7] Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story,* pp. 40–42, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1928.

"When I was thirteen, Mother told me everything about it."
"My mother and I are just like girl friends."

Some youth professed no sex knowledge whatever, having learned what they knew about sex after marriage. The following comments are illustrative of this group:

"I found out when I started to have 'em (babies)."
"Before I got married, I thought babies came from hospitals."
"When I was married, I was dumb as a doorknob."
"The only thing I know is what I hear people say—that you buy babies from a doctor."

One should not imply that all sex education obtained from peers is undesirable. In a society that offers no certain and adequate sex instruction, much of the education received from peers is necessary even though it may not be given in the most desirable manner. There are certain phases of sex education that may be given more realistically to a girl by one of her older friends or sisters than by the mother herself. This is especially true with regard to attitudes toward boys and methods of handling them in pair situations.

Of Maryland youth studied by Bell,[8] 74.8 per cent felt that sex education should be taught in the schools, 19.4 per cent felt that it should not be, 5.8 per cent expressed no opinion.

The Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People conducted in April, 1948, reported that 82 per cent of high-school young people felt that sex problems should be discussed in the high school.[9] This sample was nationwide in scope.

The State College of Washington study showed that almost two-thirds of high-school seniors thought that parents and adults in the home were the ideal sources of sex information but that almost half thought that class and supervised discussion groups were also ideal sources of sex information.[10]

Clifford R. Adams,[11] Director of the Marriage Counseling Service, Pennsylvania State College, reports that frank sex instruction by parents contributes greatly to emotional maturity and, therefore, to the eventual marital happiness of young people.

[8] *Ibid.,* p. 91.

[9] H. H. Remmers, N. L. Gage, and Ben Shimberg, "Youth Looks at Schools and Jobs," Lafayette, Ind.

[10] Elias, *loc. cit.*

[11] "How to Pick a Mate," *The American Magazine,* December, 1944; condensed also in *The Reader's Digest,* 46:19–22, January, 1945.

There has been some improvement between the generations in this field of sex education.[12] Figure 28 below compares the proportion of college young people and their mothers who received their first sex information before age thirteen. Striking improvement between the generations is seen among both urban and rural women.

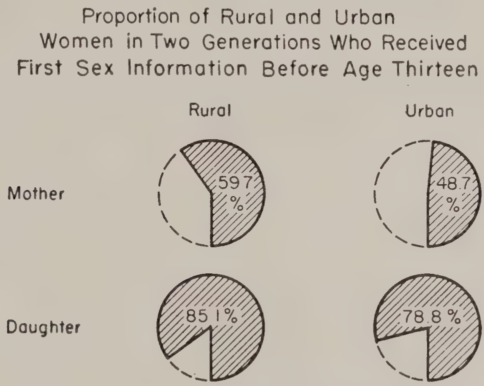

Fig. 28. More Women Are Receiving Sex Education.

A striking increase in sex education is observed between the generations in both areas. Rural women of mother-and-daughter generations more often received sex information in the preadolescent period than did urban women. (*Paul H. Landis, "Marriage Preparation in Two Generations," Marriage and Family Living,* 13:155–156, *Fall,* 1951.)

The source of first sex information has also improved (see Fig. 29). It will be seen that daughters more often got their first sex information from adults and from school than did mothers, and fewer of them got it from playmates and friends, which often are vulgar sources.

It may be that youth need sex education little more than they have in other generations, but they need it for a different reason. Considerations of sex are frank and open. The only safeguard a young person has is an understanding of his biological make-up and of its functions. In preceding generations young people needed sex education to protect them from ignorance and confusion and from mental perplexities inherent in a situation where sex subjects were taboo and surrounded by a great deal of mystery and seclusion and even by deception on the part of adults.

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[12] Paul H. Landis, "Sex Education: The Facts About Two Generations," *Clearing House,* 24:451–455, April, 1950; also his "Marriage Preparation in Two Generations," *Marriage and Family Living,* 13:155–156, Fall, 1951.

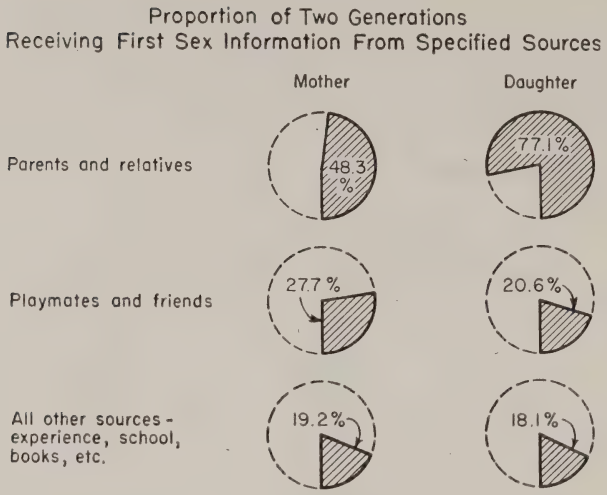

FIG. 29. THE SOURCE OF SEX EDUCATION HAS IMPROVED.

Parents and relatives were the main source of first sex information in both generations, but more so in the daughter generation. Playmates and friends were a much less important first source among daughters than mothers. The percentages total more than 100 because several students and mothers mentioned more than one source. (*Paul H. Landis, "Marriage Preparation in Two Generations," Marriage and Family Living,* 13:155–156, *Fall,* 1951.)

THE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH TO THE NEW MORALITY

The rational approach to the problem of conflict between sex drive and social codes in our society would seem to be to teach that all organic drives have their normal and natural place when confined to customary channels. The older approach to man's organic nature, which condemned desire as sin except as it was needed to perpetuate the race, is no longer appropriate. Enjoyment was not a part of the philosophy of a puritanic pioneer society; it is of our society. When sex impulse was considered unclean, a sense of sex guilt often carried over into married life. Many women were never able to enjoy the normal physical experience of marriage because of conditioning in a prudish culture.

The modern approach is to recognize that man's organic nature needs to be expressed in accepted channels, that sex education should approach the question of the sex drive, not from a standpoint of its being an undesirable phase of man's nature to be expressed only for the sake of progeny, but rather to recognize that the proper exercise of organic drives lends to enjoyment.

Such a knowledge has been shown to be related to successful adjustment in marriage.[13]

The school, the church, and other conditioning institutions must reconcile man's animal nature with social demands. In training the adolescent, it is always difficult to recognize animal nature and yet achieve the goal of effective social control. There is a fine line of discrimination between recognizing organic drives as proper and right in their place and sanctioning their free exercise.

There is much evidence that the newer approach to sex education and to moral training, which has acknowledged the importance of giving animal drives normal expression, has at the same time seen the development of a disregard for moral taboos, which threatens the monogamous family. It is doubtful that this change in attitudes toward organic nature is entirely responsible, however. There have been many forces operating in American culture in recent years to break down restraint in moral attitudes.

The whole philosophy of education has become more liberal. Young people have been taught to ask a reason for submitting to any kind of social restraint. We have come to recognize the normality of sex drives without developing as yet sufficient rational social controls to accompany the new philosophy. The view that sex expression in any form was evil demanded little in the way of rationalized social controls. When the opposite view was taken, that is, that sex is good and proper in the accepted channels, that it is important to a happy marriage, that it has a recreational function in married life, that it is a basis for the finest expressions of human emotion and the most refined human sentiment, society can no longer depend upon the old forms of social control which were essentially a group of negative taboos.

It would seem that we must work more in the direction of teaching young people that the more beautiful and permanent expressions of the sex impulse can be realized throughout life only when certain proprieties adopted by a society with centuries of experience are rigidly adhered to. We must put sex education on a rational basis and teach youth that the proprieties of sex which are customary have been shown to be identified with happy and successful marriage and permanent family life in our kind of society.

Only by such means will we be able to maintain sufficient social control to restrain the powerful sex impulse in adolescents and youths and protect them from the vices that definitely threaten our monogamous system of marriage and the permanent and happy compatible relationships that are made possible through marriage.

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[13] L. M. Terman, *Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness,* McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1938; also, E. W. Burgess and L. C. Cottrell, Jr., *Predicting Success or Failure in Marriage,* Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1939.

Fortunately, frankness in the field of recognizing man's organic nature has thrown the field open for research. Some data have been assembled to indicate the effect of sex behavior in adolescence and youth on adult behavior and adult happiness. For example, research has been conducted in the field of marriage and factors related to marital happiness. Some of these studies indicate clearly that the behavior patterns of adolescence have a decided relationship to happiness in the marriage relationship in adulthood in our kind of civilization.[14]

The hope of the new morality is that such relationships will be clearly pointed out to youth by teachers who are willing to face the facts and that youth will accept the verdict of scientific findings and regulate their conduct accordingly. To a generation reared on taboos, this may not seem like an effective approach to the problem of social control, but let those who feel this way about it suggest other controls that will be more effective. Certainly young people in our age are not going to return to the acceptance of the old taboos and restrain organic drives simply because certain kinds of behavior are taboo. A new basis for morality must emerge. It is the assumption of this discussion that this new morality must be founded upon proved relationships between conduct and its consequences to the person and to society.

Early in life the child and adolescent become impressed with the validity of science. In the world around them they see science at work in all its precise manifestations. The scientific is approved and accepted. In this kind of world it is hardly possible that we can justify many of the old taboos except in terms of demonstrated effects.

We know that certain manifestations of animal drives are undesirable, not simply because society has considered them so and censors them out of the field of proper conduct, but we know they are undesirable because of the effect they have upon the person who develops habits built on wrong forms of expression. We know that they are wrong, also, because of the social consequences of these acts in the kind of group world in which the youth will live throughout his lifetime.

There is no hope that all young people will accept the verdict of science or custom in regulating their behavior in conformity to social codes. There is no hope that all youth will obey any code; they never have in any society. There are those who are born with organic drives so strong that it is almost impossible for normal society to regulate them. There are others who are not particularly teachable. There are still others who will not be properly taught even under the most effective system of social regulation.

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[14] Terman, *loc. cit.;* also, Burgess and Cottrell, *loc. cit.*

So regardless of what philosophy one accepts with regard to man's organic nature, the place it has in a normal society, and the kind of controls that are necessary to keep organic drives in conformity with social definitions, 100 per cent success is never attainable. A society must always make provisions for the pervert, the morally unclean, the delinquent, the misfit, the criminal.

Probably the most important phase of sex education for which the school is responsible is to see that the adolescent and youth understand that sex is normal and proper in its place, thus removing the abnormal taboos and fears and irrational attitudes which too much characterized sex attitudes in previous generations when society refused to recognize frankly that man is an animal in certain phases of his personality.

The important point to be emphasized is that parent and teacher are falling short of their responsibility if they leave sex education to chance. This phase of behavior, which is so closely identified with morality in American society, so universally associated with happiness or discord in family relationships, and, therefore, so intimately related to various phases of personality integration, demands the most careful training. Because of vulgar ideas so frequently associated with sex, the employment of the best pedagogical techniques by the most competent persons is desirable.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Is custom a sound reason for observing a particular form of behavior?
2. Can one build a case for premarital chastity? If so, summarize the evidence.
3. Compare modern scientific views of the effects of masturbation with the traditional views of a generation ago. What is the meaning to pedagogy?
4. State the case for sex education in the schools. Against it.
5. What are the objectives of sex education?
6. Is adequate sex education generally given today? Cite evidence.
7. Do young people desire sex education? Cite proof.
8. Has there been improvement between the generations? Give evidence.
9. On what basis should the school try to establish control in the field of sex behavior?

10. State the case for a frank and rational approach to the problem of sex instruction.

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CHAPTER 16

Mate Selection and Marriage

THE CHANGING INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

In more stable societies the problem of marital adjustment is largely a matter of fitting into the established institutional system. In our culture the institutional structure itself is changing, so that its objectives and demands are poorly defined. As its accepted objectives the traditional family had (1) permanent pair relationships and (2) offspring. The first assured the lifelong settling of the problem of mating for the individual; the second assured the perpetuation of the blood strain, as well as the social heritage of the family through the generations.

Today even these basic objectives are by no means clear. True, the idea of permanence of the pair relationship still has considerable sanction and is without doubt the dream of every young couple who become deeply involved in love, but at the same time there is the reality of impermanence in the mate relationship in our society where about one in four marriages voluntarily is broken before death takes one member of the pair. Serial marriage is becoming a reality, for about three-fourths of those who become divorced remarry within five years.[1]

In the realm of basic emotional and biological drives, youths crave in marriage exactly what their grandparents craved. The difficulty is that the social setting in which the family finds itself makes them a little uncertain that they will be able to realize a permanent and satisfactory emotional and biological union.

That the odds of marriage are actually pondered by many young people today is clear. The following brief excerpt from a student paper illustrates the nature of some of these queries:

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[1] Data and literature on this subject are summarized in Paul H. Landis, "Sequential Marriage," *Journal of Home Economics,* 42:625–628, October, 1950.

> Reading and observation have convinced me that marriage in order to be lasting must be a union of mutual interests because infatuation and glamour wear off. There is nothing in my family relationships to make me believe that the marriage state is undesirable, but present trends reveal that a mate must be chosen with more care than ever before. In spite of religious training, I believe divorce to be preferred to unhappiness. As for companionate marriage, I am too conservative to have a broad-minded opinion of it as yet, I feel. If both men and women were on the single standard, there would be more marital bliss.

Children are no longer taken for granted; they must be weighed with other goals, objectives, and values. Having children may interfere with the attaining of these other goals. Of the previous generation of childbearers (married women fifty to seventy-four years of age at the time of the 1940 census), 14.7 per cent bore no children. A part of this sterility was without doubt voluntary, especially in urban areas. There 16.9 per cent of women were childless, compared to 8.8 per cent of rural farm women.[2]

Bell obtained views of 11,707 youths in Maryland, during the depression years, on this question of number of children desired.[3] Over a thousand wanted no children at all. The median number desired was 2.7 children. Slight differences were found in urban and rural youth; the median number of children wanted by the farm group was 2.8, by village and city groups 2.7. Forty-four per cent of both boys and girls thought two children was the ideal number. The median number of living children in the parental families was 4.7.

There is little doubt that what the general average of young people considered an ideal size of family increased as more prosperous times came during the Second World War and the period following. The Gallup Poll showed an increase in ideal size of family from 1941 to 1945. The Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People,[4] taken in 1949, with a nationwide sample of high-school young people, showed their ideals with regard to size of family (see Table 19).

Study of a sample of 307 young women at the State College of Washington in 1947 showed that 58 per cent of the rural young women and 47 per cent of the urban young women thought that three was the ideal number of children.[5]

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[2] *Population, Special Reports, Series P*-44, *No.* 2, Feb. 10, 1944.

[3] Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story,* pp. 36–38, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1938.

[4] H. H. Remmers and Ben Shimberg, *The Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People, No.* 20, January, 1949.

Throughout history, mating has been under the direction of adults—a hired matchmaker, parents, the wife's brother or uncle, almost anyone but the individual himself has had something to say about whom he married. The development in the United States of a highly romantic conception of marriage and the family, along with the trend in Western civilization toward increased mobility, has gradually led to turning the choice of a mate over to young people. As a consequence, rather than the choosing of a mate for qualities that are likely to wear well, the family being thus built into a permanent institution, the objectives of marriage and the family become a romantic holiday rather than progeny.

TABLE 19. *Number of Children Considered Ideal by Typical High-school Group*

Number of children	Percentage of group
None	2
1 or 2	41
3 or 4	48
5 or more	9

> America appears to be the only country where love is a national problem. Nowhere else can one find a people devoting so much attention to the relationship between men and women. Nowhere else is there so much concern because this relationship does not always make for perfect happiness.[6]

THE EMOTIONAL TRANSITION OF ADOLESCENCE

The roots of emotional life are in the parental family; they remain there throughout childhood, the parents and siblings being the natural center of emotional attachment. During adolescence there must be a gradual and normal shift of the deeper emotional attachments from the family focus to members of the opposite sex. The ultimate attainment of emotional maturity

[5] Arlene Sheeley, Paul H. Landis, and Vernon Davies, "Marital and Family Adjustment in Rural and Urban Families of Two Generations," *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 506, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., Fig. 9.

[6] Raoul de Rossy de Sales, "Love in America," *Atlantic Monthly,* May, 1938.

depends in large part upon the effectiveness with which the adolescent succeeds in making this transfer of his deeper emotional attachments to a member of the opposite sex. Those who fail to make this transfer and who remain permanently "tied to the mother's apron strings," or too much attached to the father or to a brother or sister, fail to achieve the kind of emotional maturity that is necessary for establishing a new independent family.

The transfer of love attachments to a focus outside the family need not be complete but must be fairly so. Some individuals make the transfer sufficiently to marry but still cling too tenaciously to the family and revert back to it for emotional satisfaction in every marriage crisis. The daughter who is constantly running back to mother, or who has to have the father or mother move into the home, and the son who must always remain with his mother even after marriage are examples.

Since the days of Freudian psychology, much has been made of these abnormal attachments of child to parent or parent to child, which may hinder an individual in a decision favorable to marriage or may interfere even after marriage has taken place. We have all known the youth whose first consideration in deciding whether or not to marry, or even to leave home, is whether or not it will "hurt" the father or mother. The young person should never have to apply this test to his decision concerning marriage. Parents who are themselves mature and face life realistically should be ready to permit their children to go when these major transitions in life come. The fact remains nonetheless that many sons or daughters are not able to leave the nest without a struggle against childhood emotional attachments.

THE ROMANTIC PATTERN OF MATE SELECTION

Under our highly romantic pattern of mate selection, the average youth approaches marriage after many experiences of dating, after numerous emotional thrills in the realm of romance, and after having broken at least one previous engagement.

In a society where love-making is a major pastime, where the choice of a mate is left almost entirely in the hands of youth, and where the recognized goal of marriage is personal happiness, young people would seem to have a great deal more responsibility placed upon their shoulders for the future of the family institution than in societies where marriage comes without a previous history of romance and where mate selection is by parents or other elders who have in mind practical considerations rather than romance in matching the pair. At least we must admit that many of the problems of modern adolescents and youths in the realm of emotional turmoil, moral decision, and anxious deliberations over courses of action grow out of the romantic complex.

Among the youth group in high school and college, dating is used as a status-gaining device. A girl's or a boy's desirability as a date is taken as a measure of personal worth, the number of desirable dates as an index of success and popularity.[7]

In any society, one of the most rigorous tests of the effectiveness of class lines is the test of marriage. In caste societies, where there is no movement among the social classes, there is no marriage across class lines except for the rare person who loses caste by marriage. Conversely, one of the best tests of the effectiveness of the freedom of movement in an open-class society is the test of whether or not young people date and marry across the recognized class lines.

As a test of this problem, Hollingshead[8] in *Elmtown's Youth* studied dating behavior of high-school youth across class lines. The results of this study of interclass dating behavior is shown in Table 20. It will be seen that while most dating was within one's own class group, the fact nonetheless remains that there was considerable dating across the class lines. If there is dating across class lines, there will also be marriage across class lines, perhaps less of marriage than of dating, for it is generally recognized that many young people date across class lines who would not marry so.

Summing up his findings, Hollingshead reports that when a boy crosses class lines there is one out of two chances that he will date a girl below himself, which means, of course, that in one out of two cases a girl from the lower class dates above herself. The coefficient of contingency for the boys was 0.60 and for the girls 0.76, showing that dating of equals is the dominating pattern in dating and courtship relations.

That boys date down more than they marry down is suggested by the fact that Hollingshead found that often the upper-class boy looks upon the lower-class girl as "fair game." In many such cases the date is a quest for sex exploitation rather than a serious interest in courtship and marriage.

At the beginning, dating is often in clique groups. The typical peer-group cliques, Hollingshead finds, are composed of either five boys or five girls. Four of the five members belong to the same class in school; three of the members ordinarily belong to the same prestige class (his study divides prestige groups into five categories on the basis of highest to lowest status). His findings on clique relationships are summarized in Table 20.

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[7] For an excellent discussion of this, see Willard Waller, "The Dating and Rating Complex," *American Sociological Review,* 3:727–734, October, 1937; also, his *The Family* (revised in 1951), pp. 173–302, The Cordon Company, Inc., New York, 1938.

[8] August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth,* John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1949.

TABLE 20. *Distribution of Clique Relations by Prestige and School Classes for Each Sex**

Combination of clique relations	Boys, per cent	Girls, per cent
Within school and prestige class	54	60
Within school class but outside prestige class	32	26
Outside school class but within prestige class	12	13
Outside both school and prestige class	2	1
Total	100	100

* August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth*, p. 211, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1949.

Hollingshead believes that the tendency to confine clique and dating relationships to members of the same social class tends to maintain the class lines. Particularly obnoxious to upper-class youth are clique or dating relationships with those of the lowest social class. The middle of the five social classes, namely, Class III, tends to date and clique with both those above and below, since they can do so without reaching too far beyond their own social class. Class V, the lowest social class, is so clearly marked that adolescent clique and date relationship tend to be confined more to their own stratum than to those of any other social class.

Hollingshead believes that adolescent dating and clique structure reflect clearly the adult structure of the social system.

This and other studies of social class to date have largely dealt with small towns in rural sections. It is possible that clique and dating lines are more rigid in such areas than in large cities where anonymity is more characteristic of the large-school situation, although conclusions on this point await careful studies.

DATING

In most circles today it is considered desirable that young people "circulate" rather than go steady from the beginning until they find a relationship that will satisfy both their emotional and intellectual taste.[9] It is even considered that wide experience in dating is favorable to ultimate courtship. The girl who is considered desirable as a date by a number of fellows is presumed to be the one most likely to be sought after for marriage.

Because of extensive dating in contemporary society, it probably becomes increasingly difficult for the average youth to narrow down his courtship to the point where he is ready to select one mate and enter into a marriage bargain for life. Dating, however, if conducted on a discreet level, gives the youth experience in evaluating different personality types and behavior patterns in the members of the opposite sex, which is probably an advantage, providing he does not associate so promiscuously that he loses the ability to decide what type of person would be a satisfactory mate to him. Dating experience is also essential to tempering the highly romantic and unreal notion of love so characteristic in American society. Most young people after a certain amount of normal experience in dating come to appreciate that there are many individuals of the oposite sex with whom they could live happily and that there are certain other individuals with whom they could not possibly be happy.

As unsatisfactory as this form of mate selection is in terms of its consequences to the stability of family life, we must accept the fact that the pattern exists and will persist in American culture. In a mobile society where much of romance is conducted beyond the reach of parents and other interested relatives, greater responsibility is placed upon the adult group in family and school for seeing that young people have some standard by which they may evaluate themselves and those with whom they associate as prospective mates. The ability of a member of the opposite sex to inspire romance seems now to be the primary criterion for mate selection. Yet this quality alone is a highly speculative element on which to found a permanent and satisfactory marriage. A lifelong institutional relationship must have something more than impulse to guarantee its success.

For the young person in a highly mobile society who is so often, in his early adjustment to economic life and to secondary-group experience, among strangers, the love element is likely to have an exaggerated importance. In strange situations deep affection for a member of the opposite sex is likely to be used as a remedy for a sense of isolation, as a device for restoring self-assurance and for protecting himself against the apparent hostility and coldness of the world about him. Love for such an individual comes to stand for success in social adjustments. It is likely that many young people in their first experience with new situations will continue in our kind of society to rate love as an emotional experience much more highly than it should be rated among the other values that are essential to successful marriage and family life.[10]

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[9] J. K. Folsom in Howard Becker and Reuben Hill, *Marriage and the Family,* p. 180, D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1942.

One of the unfortunate by-products of our highly romantic conception of marriage is that the girl who fails to obtain dates and later proposals of marriage, in our society, where the male is the aggressor in dating, courtship, and marriage, feels that she has lost out in the most important competitive relationship of a woman's world. The unfortunate consequence is that many of these young women feel defeated, unreasonably frustrated, even to the point of personality distortion.

MARITAL MATURITY IN WARTIME

One of the major concerns of adolescents and youth in wartime is that of finding a mate and making a normal marriage. When the Korean war broke out, one of the major preoccupations of high-school and younger college youth was that of being able to find a desirable mate. Girls particularly were aware of the unbalanced sex ratio of wartime and were aware of some of the problems that their older sisters had faced during the Second World War.

Anticipating the man shortage, they debated at length as to whether or not they should marry immediately if the opportunity presented itself, whether they should become engaged and carry on their courtship over a long period by correspondence, or whether they should break up their present love affair when the young man went into the Army, rather than face long periods of absence and deny themselves of such association with the opposite sex as might be possible during the absence of their boy friend or fiance.

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[10] For a discussion of some of these psychological problems, see Karen Horney, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time,* pp. 286–287, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1937; also, J. K. Folsom, *The Family and Democratic Society,* rev. ed., John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1948.

In many respects, from a psychological standpoint, the problem the girl faces in wartime with regard to romance is even more serious than that of the boy.

On the other hand, the young men face serious problems in wartime from the standpoint of attaining marital maturity. Long periods of separation with the male sex creates an abnormal interest in the opposite sex, places the young man in a position of temptation from the standpoint of securing sex outlets, and throws him into the temptation of marrying in a foreign country or of making a hasty marriage on furloughs at home from casual contact to compensate for his loneliness.

The soldier who migrates from place to place, who is thrown among strangers and denied contact with family and former friends, very often proposes marriage to a girl after two or three dates. He seeks desperately to maintain an emotional anchor that will give him some sense of security and intimacy in a world where he seems to have lost contact with the closer ties that bind a man to his fellows. Romance comes to stand for all that he has lost in his previous childhood and youthful associations in a more intimate family and neighborhood group.

The unfortunate thing about much of this kind of romance is that it is blind to the practical considerations that should enter into marriage. Marriage often proves disillusioning as the young couple come to know each other better and often discover that they are fundamentally incompatible in childhood background, in life interests, even in fundamental character traits and life goals.

There is always the tendency for members of both sexes to rush into marriage in wartime following heated courtships on temporary leaves and later to regret these marriages when they find that they have married a comparative stranger. The heavy aftermath of divorce following war is in part due to this and to the tendency for married young people to grow apart in interests when separated.

The 1940's brought the highest divorce rate in history and also an unprecedently high remarriage rate. Of divorced persons more than three-fourths remarried within a five-year period. Undoubtedly a high proportion of these marriages were of young people who had gone through the trial-and-error experience of a hasty or otherwise ill-advised marriage.

The younger the person at the time of marriage, the greater the likelihood of his divorce and the greater the likelihood of his early remarriage. In times of war and immediately following, serial marriage tends to become a characteristic pattern of our society.

We know now that the divorced person is a more likely prospect for marriage than the single person in any given age group. This indicates that once a youth attempts marriage, even though it is unsatisfactory, he is not content until he marries again.[11] The likelihood of marriage at given ages for a divorced woman and for women who have never been married is shown in the accompanying chart. Data for men are similar.

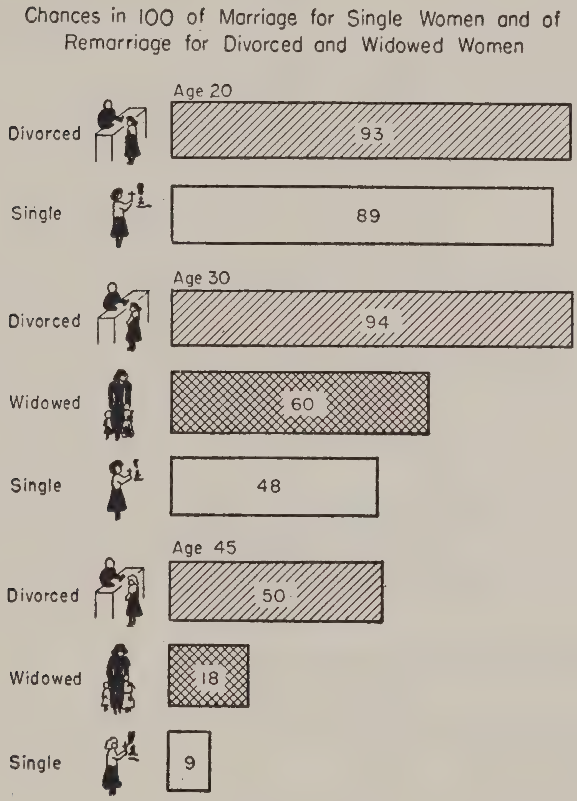

FIG. 30. DIVORCED PERSONS ARE MOST LIKELY TO MARRY.

Divorced persons have better chances of marriage than single persons. The younger the divorced person, the more likely he is to remarry. Youthful marriages in wartime contribute to the high divorce and remarriage rates. (*Paul H. Landis, "Sequential Marriage," Journal of Home Economics,* 42:625–628, *October,* 1950.)

In some respects wartime experience was beneficial to family life. If the author's observations are correct, many young men came out of the Second

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[11] For a summary of information in this field, see Landis, *loc. cit.*

World War with a more serious interest in marriage and family than had been characteristic of the preceding generation. One of the most important desires of many of these young men, who had suffered from years of isolation from family life, was to establish a perfect family in which they would realize happiness and satisfaction for themselves and their mate and also in which they would enjoy being fathers.

After the Second World War many young men actually took a pride in fatherhood and were cooperative in helping care for the children and taking their part in assuming home-management responsibility. This was particularly true of veterans who were able to continue their education under the GI Bill. In many cases both husband and wife worked hard at seeing the husband through college and at the same time faced the problem of child rearing.

An ideal system of cooperation was established, and the rigid definition of men's and women's work tended to disappear as the young couple worked together in carrying out the home duties, in caring for the children, and in working to supplement their GI income. In this there was a gain, not only in the recognition of the equality of the sexes, but in the children's being given a greater sense of security in that both father and mother were vitally concerned about their care and comfort.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. What are the broad institutional objectives of marriage? In what respects have these changed? Cite evidence.
2. How many children do youth consider the ideal family? Has there been a change in this ideal?
3. Is individual choice the usual method of matchmaking? Explain.
4. How may childhood emotional attachments to family members affect the achievement of marital maturity?
5. Describe the romantic pattern as it affects dating and courtship patterns of adolescents and youth. How does social class affect pair relationships?
6. Is extensive dating desirable? Discuss.
7. Can the emotional strains of our romantic pattern be costly to the individual? Explain.
8. What problems does war bring in the field of attaining marital maturity?
9. Discuss the remarriage rate of divorced youth.

For Selected References see next chapter.

CHAPTER 17

Mate Selection and Marriage (Continued)

COURTSHIP AND MARITAL SUCCESS OR FAILURE

Dr. Henry Bowman, in charge of family-life education at Stevens College, believes that most marriage failures are in reality courtship failures.[1]

Research shows that there is a decided advantage in having been acquainted for a considerable time previous to marriage. Figure 31 below shows that those who married after short acquaintance in only about one case in five made good adjustments in marriage. In 47 per cent of the cases they made poor adjustments. The longer the period of acquaintance, the better the adjustment couples made to marriage.

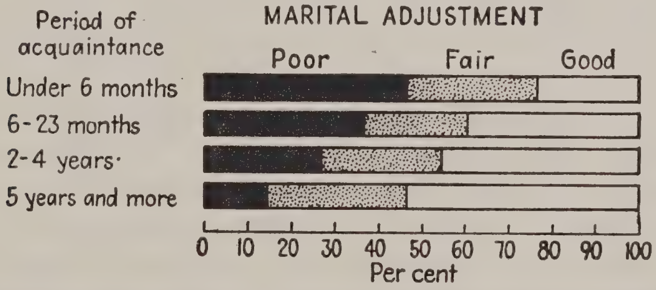

FIG. 31. PERIOD OF ACQUAINTANCE BEFORE MARRIAGE, AND SUCCESS OF ADJUSTMENT IN MARRIAGE.

Short courtships mean poor marriages in a high proportion of cases. Long acquaintance is an important safeguard. (*E. W. Burgess and L. C. Cottrell, Jr., Predicting Success or Failure in Marriage, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York,* 1939, *p.* 164.)

A similar relationship has been found for the period of keeping company. Those who kept company with each other for three months or less show a high proportion of poor adjustments. Most successful marriages are found among those who have kept company three years or more.[2] Marriages preceded by short acquaintanceship and short engagements are less successful than those with longer periods of acquaintanceship. The risks of unhappiness are greater among those without engagements.[3]

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[1] See his book, *Marriage for Moderns,* 2d ed., McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1948.

First experiences with love are likely to be based on either sheer sexual attraction or love at first sight growing out of one's "fantasy ideal" of a perfect mate rather than upon a thorough knowledge of compatability, mutual interests, and other qualities that wear well.[4]

Whether people who have short courtships represent a type of temperament that fails in marriage, or whether these same people, had they prolonged their courtship, would have broken up their relationship and later married after a more protracted period of courtship with another, we can only guess. It seems reasonable to suppose that the period of courtship is not in itself the cause of unsuccessful marriages. It could be, however. The early stages of courtship are often impossibly romantic. Marriage at that time might lead a person to expect more of the marriage than any marriage could realize. Lengthened courtship usually brings about a more reasonable understanding of the other person so that an understanding marriage may result.

The first stage in love has been described[5] as excited love—the kind of love that leaves one breathless. It is based partly on the novelty of the new experience and is the kind of love that cannot last either in or outside of marriage. If marriage takes place, the couple are inclined to blame marriage for the wrecking of the beautiful illusion. Such love, if continued, usually settles down to a more permanent type of love that is characteristic of the longer courtship.

THE PROBLEM OF EARLY MARRIAGE

Although one frequently hears, and even sees in printed literature, the statement that the average age of marriage is later now than in former generations and although one hears sex delinquency and premarital sexual relations blamed on late marriage, facts show that the average age of marriage has decreased each decade since the time census data were first kept. Note from the accompanying White House Conference chart that the median age of marriage for both brides and grooms has dropped each decade.

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[2] E. W. Burgess and Leonard S. Cottrell, *Predicting Success or Failure in Marriage,* pp. 166–167, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1939. Also, Lewis M. Terman, *Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness,* pp. 197–201, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1938.

[3] Paul Popenoe and D. W. Neptune, "Acquaintance and Betrothal," *Social Forces,* 16:552–555, 1937–1938.

[4] Clifford R. Adams, "How to Pick a Mate," *The American Magazine,* December, 1944; condensed also in *The Reader's Digest,* 46:19–22, January, 1945.

[5] J. K. Folsom, *The Family,* pp. 68–70, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1934.

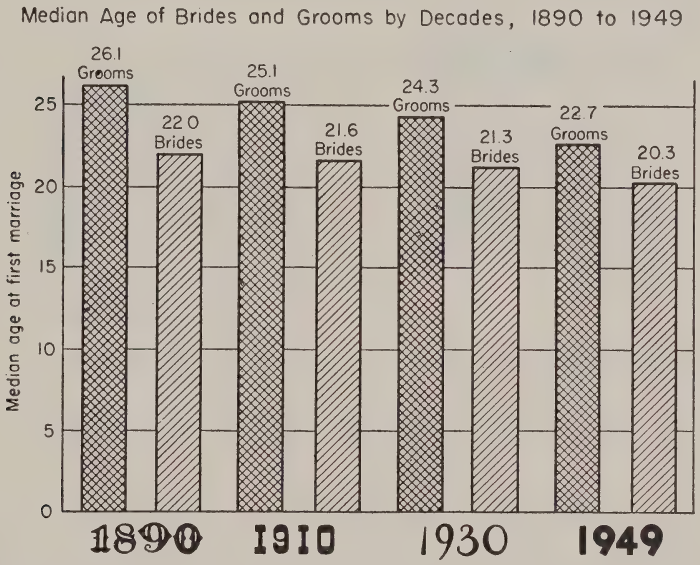

FIG. 32. WE ARE MARRYING YOUNGER EACH DECADE.

Note the decrease in median age of marriage for both men and women and also the decreasing difference in age of brides and grooms. Today brides and grooms are much nearer the same age than in 1890. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

In 1890 the usual age for grooms was over 26 years; for brides, 22 years. This compares with the usual age in 1949 of 22.7 years for grooms and 20.3 years for brides. Not only has the age of marriage decreased but differences in age of bride and groom have decreased. In 1890 the average age difference between bride and groom was four years; now it is a little over two years.

The pie chart following shows the proportion of young people in each age group married today. Almost a third of the girls are married by the time they reach nineteen years of age and almost two-thirds are married by the time they reach twenty-four years of age. Of men, over 7 per cent are married by the time they reach nineteen years of age and 43.6 per cent by the time they reach twenty-four years of age.

While it is no doubt true that some young people delay marriage for education, or for other distant goals, it is clear that most young people marry much earlier than did their parents or grandparents. The Second World War gave special impetus to marriage in that the psychological environment and economic conditions were favorable.

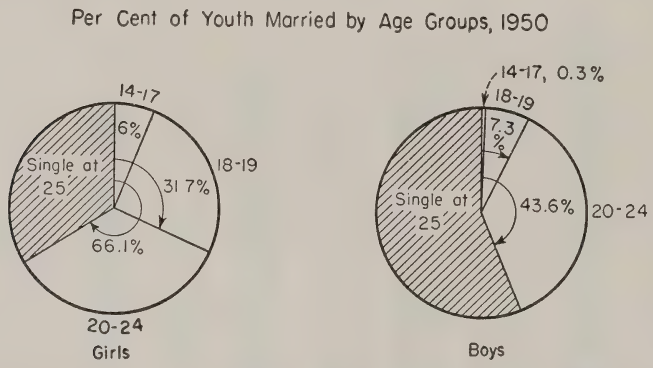

Fig. 33. Two-thirds of Girls and More Than 40 Per Cent of Boys Marry before Twenty-five. (*Data from U.S. Census.*)

The government, during the Second World War, subsidized marriage and childbirth on a scale never before undertaken in the United States. This removed most of the economic handicaps from marriage for those in the armed services, and the higher wage rates for both men and women in civilian employment removed most of the economic handicaps for civilians. As a consequence, the age of marriage was younger in that decade than ever before.

We have already suggested that youthful marriages are partly responsible for our extremely high divorce rates and for our high remarriage rates. What does the evidence show regarding the relationship between age at marriage and happiness in marriage?

AGE AT MARRIAGE AND HAPPINESS IN MARRIAGE

The relationship of age at marriage and happiness in marriage has been made the subject of several important studies. A study[6] of 792 couples shows

[6] Terman, *op. cit.*, pp. 180–183.

that age of marriage bears a relationship to happiness in marriage, especially for women who marry under twenty. They average lower happiness scores than those who marry later. Findings of another study [7] are even more striking (see Fig. 34). Almost half of the wives who married at ages sixteen to eighteen made poor adjustments to marriage, and only about 15 per cent made good adjustments. Good adjustments were found to increase with later ages of marriage. With husbands, marriages under twenty-two years of age showed a high proportion of poor adjustments—about 40 per cent and only about 27 per cent made good adjustments. Husbands marrying after thirty also had a high percentage as did those marrying under twenty-two. Another study of 200 married women and 200 married men showed that those married later were happier.[8]

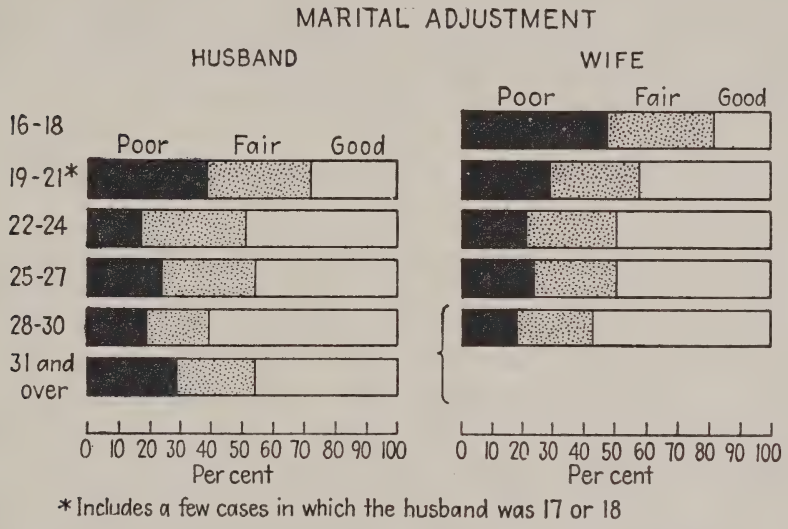

FIG. 34. AGE OF MARRIAGE OF HUSBAND AND WIFE AND SUCCESS IN ADJUSTMENT.

Almost one-half of the wives who married under nineteen years of age made poor adjustments in marriage; few made good adjustments. Husbands who married under twenty-two years of age stood considerable chance of poor adjustment. (*E. W. Burgess and L. C. Cottrell, Jr., Predicting Success or Failure in Marriage, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York*, 1939, *p.* 117.)

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[7] Burgess and Cottrell, *op. cit.*, pp. 115–117.

[8] G. V. Hamilton and Kenneth MacGowan, *What Is Wrong with Marriage?* p. 278, Albert & Charles Boni, Inc., New York, 1929.

A study based on experience in a court of domestic relations showed that the ideal age for marriage for the groom is about twenty-nine years and for the bride about twenty-four years.[9]

Evidence of research is consistent in indicating that early marriages hold less promise of success than those entered into by more mature persons. Several studies have shown that early marriages make up an abnormal proportion of divorce cases.[10] Economic difficulties and lack of emotional maturity are among the risks of youthful marriages.

PARENTAL INTERFERENCE AS A FACTOR IN ACHIEVING MARITAL ADULTHOOD

We have stressed the fact that choice of a mate in modern society is left largely in the hands of youth. This seems in reality to be the fact. It is true, nonetheless, that parental interference is still to be reckoned with. This interference usually comes in families where an arbitrary authority pattern persists or in situations where abnormally strong emotional ties make the parent, for his own selfish emotional interest, try to hold the child beyond the time when he should. The parental attitude is not one of guidance but rather one of hindrance. No matter who the mate, the parent interferes, trying to block the youth's progress toward marriage and the establishment of an independent home. This same attempt at interference may carry over into marriage in cases where the youth proceeds to marry regardless of parental attitudes.

The following case is illustrative of parental interference:

> My mother and father had spent thirty-three years of married life in constant bickering and quarreling. The break finally came; my mother and father separated, and my mother and I were left together in the big house. I knew that if I ever decided to marry it would be a struggle to leave my mother because it had been hard for my brother when he left home. He was thirty when he married, and because he was a boy and older, he won out; however, my mother has never accepted my sister-in-law as a member of the family. It would be worse for me because I was the favored child and overprotected because I was so much younger than my brother.

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[9] Hornell Hart and Wilmer Shields, "Happiness in Relation to Age of Marriage," *Social Hygiene,* 12:403–410, 1926.

[10] Five studies showing this to be true are summarized in Hornell Hart and Ella B. Hart, *Personality and the Family,* pp. 97–104, D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1935.

> The blow came; I told my mother I had decided to marry a young man I had been interested in for quite some time. The inevitable happened, and my mother fought for all she was worth to keep us from marrying. Her arguments were weak: "He's red-headed and left-handed, what could be worse?" "He's an orphan, you don't know anything about him!" "His foster parents are nobodies." "You'll be poor all your life." And so she kept on. There would be the same sort of arguments no matter whom I chose to marry. I listened for several weeks, then I couldn't stand the unending nagging and heckling and was forced to move, leaving my mother alone. My conscience bothered me; I tried to see my mother's side of the story—she was alone; she needed me; I was her meal ticket; she was trying to save me from a fate like hers. . . . I gave in and went back home, but the same old argument started again. The young man and I broke our engagement to please her but continued to see each other. This didn't work out at all. I left home three times in all before we finally decided what should be done.
>
> We had groped frantically for a way out. I went to the minister; he placed both sides before me and gave me my choice; but that was no help. I already knew both sides—my mother's and my heart's. Then the young man and I went to my father. The three of us discussed frankly all the aspects of marriage. My father was in favor of it, as long as we knew what we were doing, and he was sure we did know. We reached a conclusion; the only way to settle the matter was for us to be married immediately, with or without my mother's consent. The young man and I went to Mother together and told her our plan, but she was unwilling to give in. We were married the following week, without her consent, but with my father's heartiest wishes.
>
> It was nearly a year before my mother even answered one of my regular weekly letters. I never hope to have her accept my husband, although she and I are again on friendly terms. We shall never be the same confidential friends we were in my childhood days, however, because of her attitude toward my marriage.

The parents' opposition may take the form of feeling that no one could possibly be good enough for their son or daughter. In thus clinging to their children, parents are in reality not fighting the marriage so much as the loneliness of old age to which they have built no effective immunity. Although every parent knows that children, no matter how deep the attachment, must go, some cannot resist the tendency to fight the fact to try to postpone the day. In so doing, some are not able to put the child's interest first. They are too much inclined to consider the obligation of child to parent rather than the child's obligation to himself and to the next generation.

Parents who persist in such attitudes force the youth to fight, or in some cases unfortunately bring them to submission and defeat their attaining marital maturity.

THE SOCIAL CONTROL OF ROMANTIC LOVE

Romantic love is not entirely a matter of unguided impulse. If it were, there would be little hope of improving mate selection. Although individual tastes and perhaps unanalyzed biological factors enter into romantic attraction, social factors play a large part, as is indicated by studies of the attitudes of high-school and college students with reference to traits they expect in a member of the opposite sex.[11]

A questionnaire was given to a group of 869 high-school students in the sophomore, junior, and senior classes, 426 boys and 443 girls being asked to rate 25 traits, putting a 1 by the trait they considered most important in the person they would like to go with, and a 25 by the trait they disliked the most, arranging numbers from 1 to 25 for the other traits in terms of their desirability.

Both boys and girls listed "real brains" as the most important trait.[12] Girls listed second "cleanliness," third "good health," fourth "dependability," fifth "cheerfulness." Boys considered "real brains" of first importance, "good health" of second importance, "good looks" third, "cleanliness" fourth, "cheerfulness" fifth. It was interesting to notice that girls, rather than listing "good looks" as third in importance, listed it as eleventh.

Because these young people were in school, where good marks are a basis for competition, they tended to rate "real brains" more highly than young people under other situations would.

Studies of college students show that they rate certain personality traits very high. For example, a study at New York University showed that both men and women rated "disposition" extremely high; 98 per cent of men and 96 per cent of women said they woud not marry a person with an unattractive disposition and personality.[13] This study also showed that men rate looks much higher in their marriage partners than do women. Sixty-eight per cent of the men would not marry girls who were not good-looking; whereas 79 per cent of the girls would marry husbands who were not good-looking.

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[11] For a study of certain factors influencing romantic attraction, see Oliver A. Ohmann, "The Psychology of Attraction," in Helen M. Jordan, ed., *You and Marriage,* pp. 28–29, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1942.

[12] William G. Mather, "The Courtship Ideals of High-school Youth," *Sociology and Social Research,* 19:166–172, November-December, 1934.

[13] Ray E. Baber, *Marriage and the Family,* p. 149, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1939.

Baber,[14] studying the attitudes of college students in a large metropolitan university on selecting a mate, found nine items that were most often mentioned as being important by students. They were asked to check these items. The results are shown in Table 21. It will be seen that these choices reflect definitely the values of our own culture, as they affect choices in general and as they affect differences in choices between men and women. Being good-looking, as in the other studies, is rated much more highly by young men than by young women. In our society good looks is considered a very important attribute of women, not of men. Young women are much more insistent on having a husband who has more education than they. This relates directly to the role of the man as breadwinner. His occupation determines the status of the family, their standard of living and income. Young women want a man who is older and established financially. Other results in the test reflect unique factors in our marriage customs which clearly affect romantic tastes.

All these studies indicate clearly that young people do not face the problem of mate selection on the basis of romance alone. They are guided by the general standards prevalent in our culture which affect notions of beauty, character, and disposition and by the fundamental factors that affect economic security. The fact that such values do act as a check upon romance and a guide to it indicates clearly that the family, the church, the school, any institutions having to do with the training of youth, can provide values which will guide adolescents and youth more intelligently in their evaluation of a person as a prospective marriage partner. This important field of social behavior need not be left in the realm of chance even in an age when adolescents and youth, rather than parents or other adults, select their own mates.

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[14] Ray E. Baber, "Some Mate Selection Standards of College Students and Their Parents," *Journal of Social Hygiene,* 22:115–125, March, 1936. Baber studied the attitudes of parents on similar questions which tend to reflect adult judgments. Also in Baber, *Marriage and the Family,* pp. 147–154

TABLE 21. *Attitudes of 642 Junior and Senior University Students* (321 *Young Men and* 321 *Young Women*) *on Mate Selection* *

Questions	Young men, per cent answering		Young women, per cent answering	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
All other factors being satisfactory would you marry:				
1. A person of lower economic rank than your own?	93	7	82	18
2. A person decidedly not good-looking?	32	68	79	21
3. A person of unattractive disposition and personality?	2	98	4	96
4. A person of lower moral standards than your own?	29	71	20	80
5. A person from a family you consider inferior to your own?	78	22	75	25
6. A person of a different religious faith (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish) from your own?	58	42	42	58
If so, would you be willing to adopt his faith?	9	91	5	95
7. A person in decidedly poor health, likely to be of long standing if:				
His health were bad when you first became acquainted?	6	94	4	96
His health became bad after an intimate friendship has formed?	49	51	50	50
8. A person of less intelligence and (or) education than your own?	76	24	18	82
Would you want your mate to have less education than you have, the same education as you have, or more than you have?	Less, 17		Less, 0	
	Same, 78		Same, 36	
	More, 5		More, 64	
9. Do you want your mate to be older than yourself, the same age, or younger?	Older, 1		Older, 94	
	Same, 24		Same, 6	
	Younger, 75		Younger, 0	
How much older or younger?	3 years		5 years	
What is the limit in age difference beyond which you would not go?	8 years		10 years	

* Ray E. Baber, *Marriage and the Family*, p. 149, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1939.

THE SCHOOL'S CHALLENGE

American youth will continue to choose their mates with little regard to the interest or wishes of teachers, parents, guardians, or society. This we may as well take for granted. Mating will be based on romance. But we must temper the romantic impulse in youth, as we do other human impulses, by instilling in their minds ideas that will restrain and guide their emotions. We need to socialize more fully this impulse as we have socialized hunger, for instance. Eating has become a sort of fine art with us as compared to its practice by savages and infants. We control the hunger drive by etiquette and by our notions of the balanced ration and regular meals. The organic drive is still there, but in civilized society we try to act as though it were not there.

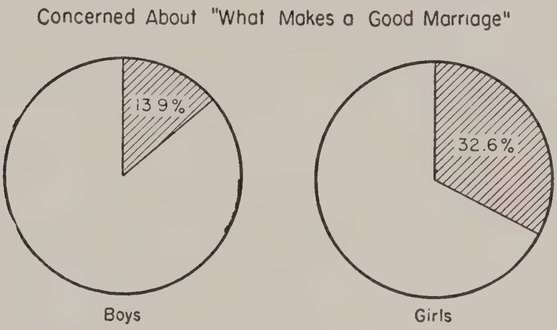

FIG. 35. MANY TEEN-AGERS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THIS PROBLEM.

More high-school seniors are concerned about this than any other problem in boy-girl relations. Is this an argument for marriage and family-life education in high school? Would such education help more boys to become aware of the importance of marriage to their future? (*L. J. Elias, High School Youth Look at Their Problems, College Bookstore, Washington State College, Pullman, Wash.,* 1949.)

We need to make romance a somewhat finer art, to elevate and direct it in the interests of a more permanent family unit and a better race. Parents could do much by building standards by which the youth can guide his selection of a mate, but reforms in custom more often begin in the school than in the home.

Most youngsters acquire a new idea of a desirable mate after going to college. They have a better ideal, and their romantic interest seeks out a type of person different from that selected before this training. College marriages on the whole turn out well. But most young people, even in our enlightened age, never go to college.

Give a young man or woman a course in eugenics and he will have set up new barriers to the free exercise of the romantic urge, for he will invariably check up on the ancestral characteristics of anyone he considers for marriage, to see whether certain weaknesses that are known to be hereditary are likely to be present in the germ plasm. Let him face economic self-responsibility and he will have set up other barriers. He will not so easily rationalize himself into marrying on short notice with the experience-belied phrase "Two can live as cheaply as one."

We need to give young people some practical ideas regarding marriage and the family; some standards by which they can evaluate themselves and their companions of the opposite sex with regard to their capacity for marriage and homemaking.

In most fields now we believe in giving experience vicariously through books and through the school curriculum. In this manner we pass on the best that the race has learned and experienced. Yet in the field of marriage and the family we let youth learn by experience. The establishment of a family—the basic institution of any nation—is left almost entirely to chance, as though we had no concern about the marital happiness of youth, to say nothing of the welfare of the next generation.

Perhaps our lethargy is a carry-over from the prudish days when marriage was sacred and sex was taboo. Perhaps it is due to the fact that most teachers are unmarried women whom we would not trust to educate our children for successful marriage. Probably, however, we have no reason, other than that romance is the custom to which we have entrusted this function of life and, having it safely pigeonholed, do not care to disturb it.

We need more courses in high school and more courses in college dealing with marriage and the family. Perhaps after having succeeded there we can go into the lower grades. Some of the problems to be dealt with in a high-school course are (1) physical qualities essential to successful marriage, (2) social qualities essential for living together happily in the family, (3) the importance of similar culture heritages, especially in religion and in economic status, (4) personal adjustments needful in family life, (5) the economic responsibilities of the family, (6) the importance of an understanding with regard to the wife's place in the home, and (7) parenthood.

Since marriage is society's ceremonial endorsement to a permanent institution, we should teach every youth to ask himself at least the following questions:

1. Do we have the physical and mental traits that guarantee reasonable hereditary equipment to the children we may have?
2. Do we have the emotional stability and ruggedness of character that is necessary to an intimate lifelong partnership?
3. Do we have the ability and training necessary to "keep the wolf from the door"?
4. Do we have culture backgrounds that would assure us similar ideas on morals, religion, standard of living, and nationality and racial questions?
5. Are we satisfied with each other's families and with the relationships that we are likely to maintain with them after marriage?
6. Do we have similar ideas regarding the place of woman in the family and the desirability of children?
7. Do we have a sufficient number of similar vocational, reactional, and other interests so that we are likely to maintain permanent bonds of companionship?

The screen notion of love at first sight, followed by the passionate kiss, the overpowering urge, the hasty marriage, and the "lived happily ever after," has been too typical of our courtship and marriage conceptions. We may as well admit that such practice does not work so well as it might, and try to draw a more realistic picture of marriage and the family for youth in the schoolroom where we are supposed to have some respect for reality.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. What is meant by the statement "Most marriage failures are in reality courtship failures"?
2. Discuss the relationship of length of courtship to marital success. Give a possible psychological explanation for the relationship that obtains.
3. Discuss the problem of early marriages, presenting an example of an early marriage.
4. Compare young men and young women with regard to age of marriage.
5. Summarize evidence showing that age of marriage is a factor in happiness in marriage.
6. On what grounds do parents often unjustly interfere with the marriages of their sons and daughters?
7. Is mate selection based on romantic attraction alone? Give proof.
8. What is the pedagogical significance of the fact that factors other than animal attraction enter into mate selection?
9. Outline a guide of points to be considered by youth who contemplate marriage.

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PART FOUR

The Struggle for Economic Adulthood

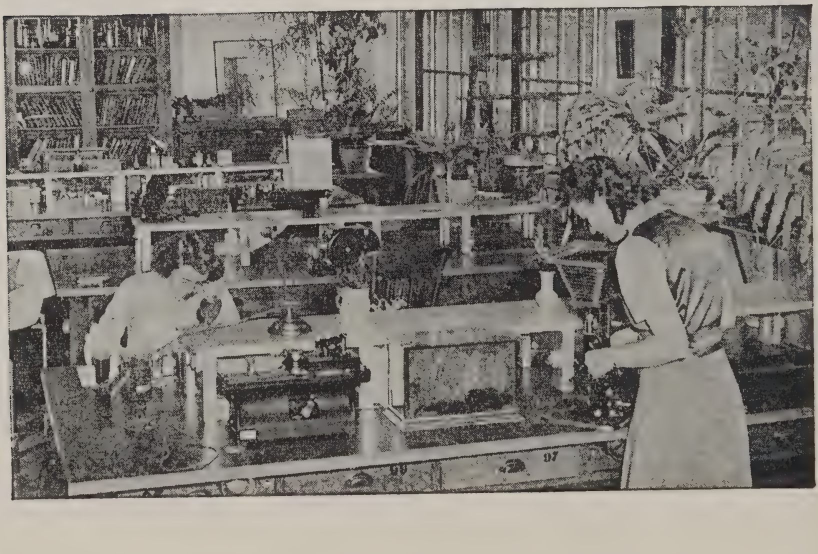
Childhood is a time of play and preparation; adulthood a time of work. The gap between is what any particular society by custom or necessity makes it. The child may immediately become the man, in fact, a strenuous work life may begin in childhood. At the opposite extreme, the span between childhood and adult work life may be a long period of years of play and learning, the routine of gainful employment coming late.

It is in the direction of late arrival at economic maturity that the industrialized world has been moving, partly because of the complexities of machine production, partly because the accumulated culture heritage has become so vast that much learning is considered a desirable preface to adulthood.

But now as always adulthood and work are synonymous, for work with its economic reward breaks the last bonds of parental authority and paves the way for marital adulthood.

We no longer live in a society where individual ambition, studious effort, and an energetic attack on the work world are sufficient guarantees of economic success. The approach to the work world must be guided, organized, and arranged for if its success is to be assured in an industrial social order.

A few can expect to engage in self-made jobs, but the majority must find a specialized place in industries, business enterprises, government, or personal services in which hundreds, thousands, and in some instances even millions are employed.



CHAPTER 18

The Bearing of Economic Forces on the Adjustments of Adolescents and Youth

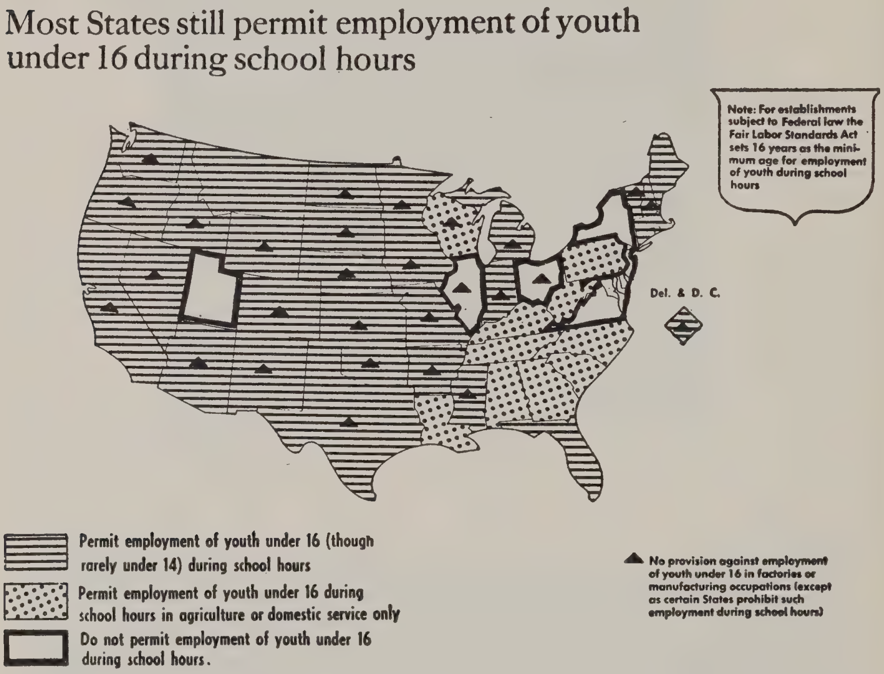
SOCIAL FORCES EXCLUDING YOUTH FROM THE WORK WORLD

The work world, like so many phases of experience in modern life, is approached by many paths. To enter some gates there are many requirements; to enter others, almost none. For practically all kinds of work there is today the requirement of a minimum age.

To understand youths' problems of entering the work world, one must have at least a minimum understanding of the broad socioeconomic forces that characterize modern economic life. An understanding of these forces will indicate why youth have found it difficult to enter directly into the labor market.

First has been the long-time tendency in American life to shift from an agricultural to an industrial economy, from rural self-sufficiency to the commercial orientation of all economic activity. This trend has continually reduced the number of self-employed persons in the economy and has made an increasing proportion of the population dependent upon others, primarily industrial corporations, for jobs. Increased emphasis on invention, technology, and mass production, as developed under the American system of corporate industrial management, has characterized this development. Efficiency of operation demands the concentration of wealth, human energy, and management into large units of production. In these great industrial organizations employment is dependent upon the needs of the corporation which, in turn, reflects market conditions. The welfare of the individual employee is of secondary concern.

Second has been the bringing to a climax of the long period of agitation against child labor. The early factory systems exploited children, youths, and women. A socially minded society had to develop protective devices to guarantee the health and education of its citizens. The general tendency has been to raise the age level at which adolescents can enter so-called "hazardous" occupations. Once it was fourteen, now in most cities it is sixteen, and, for certain kinds of highly mechanized industries, eighteen. This purposeful exclusion of adolescents and youths from the labor market by social legislation has been matched by a comparable advance in the age for compulsory schooling, which in many states has advanced from fourteen to sixteen. Few states now permit the employment of youth under fourteen during school hours, and some states permit no employment during school hours before age sixteen (see Fig. 36 above). For a summary of compulsory school attendance requirements by states turn to the chart on page 429.



Most States still permit employment of youth under 16 during school hours

Note: For establishments subject to Federal law the Fair Labor Standards Act sets 16 years as the minimum age for employment of youth during school hours

Del. & D. C.
▤ Permit employment of youth under 16 (though rarely under 14) during school hours
▨ Permit employment of youth under 16 during school hours in agriculture or domestic service only
☐ Do not permit employment of youth under 16 during school hours.
▲ No provision against employment of youth under 16 in factories or manufacturing occupations (except as certain States prohibit such employment during school hours)

FIG. 36. SCHOOLING HAS EXCLUDED THE EARLY TEEN AGES FROM THE WORK WORLD. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

Third has been the growth of labor unions, which have come to control entry to occupations according to the number of jobs available. Emphasis upon seniority rights, which employers have come to recognize, gives the established experienced worker an advantage over youth.

Fourth, in the new empire of machines, age and experience are rated highly, particularly in the operation of complicated and costly machines, where patience and judgment are desired. In any period when labor is abundant youth are the first to be excluded from the labor market because of their inexperience and also because of their lack of family responsibilities.

Fifth has been the general trend of American industry and agriculture to replace manpower with machine power in the interest of economy, safety, and general efficiency. These normal developments, which have been continuous over a period of a century, were given great impetus by the First World War and again by the Second World War.

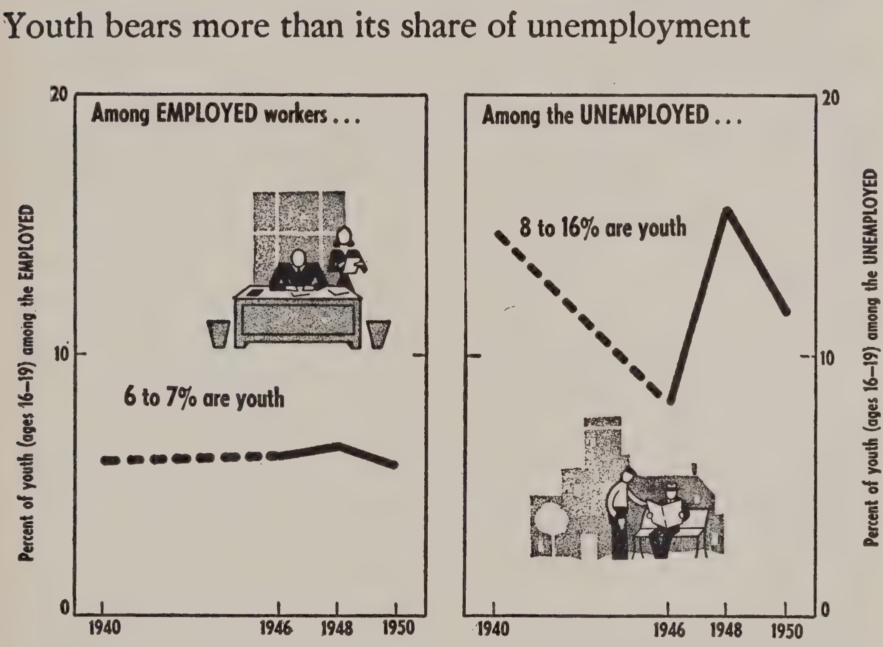


FIG. 37. RATIO OF EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED YOUTH TO TOTAL WORKERS, 1940–1950. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

The year 1950 was a good year as far as employment was concerned, yet at that time 9 per cent of youths sixteen to nineteen years of age were unemployed. The ratio of unemployment of youth to all workers for the years 1940 to 1950 is shown in the accompanying figure. It may be seen that even during this period of great prosperity, the unemployment rate among youth was high compared to that of other workers. Youth are, from the standpoint of employment, then, a marginal group, as has often been observed. They are the last to be hired and the first to be fired.

The picture of this period of almost unlimited employment opportunities is a good one indeed compared to the unemployment situation among youth during the depression year.

In 1935, when there were 21 million youths sixteen to twenty-four years of age in the population, it was estimated that 4 million of those out of school were unemployed.[1]

Table 22 shows the extent to which youth have been crowded from the work world during three decades. The group fourteen to fifteen years of age gainfully employed dropped from 17.5 per cent in 1920 to 5.2 per cent in 1940, but rose to 14.1 in 1950. The employed group sixteen and seventeen years of age was less than half as large in 1940 as in 1920. In 1940 it had returned to three-fifths of the 1920 level. The employed group eighteen and nineteen years of age decreased consistently from 1920 to 1950. The group twenty to twenty-four years of age had a greater number entering the work world in 1940 than previously, but fewer in 1950 than in 1940.

TABLE 22. *Percentage of Adolescents and Youth, Ages Fourteen to Twenty-four, Who Were Gainfully Occupied, United States,* 1920, 1930, 1940, *and* 1950

Age group, years	1920			1930			1940			1950		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
14–15	23.3	11.6	17.5	12.6	5.8	9.2	8.0	2.2	5.2	21.1	6.8	14.1
16–17	58.0	31.6	44.7	41.2	22.1	31.7	29.0	12.9	21.0	34.4	20.0	27.2
18–19	78.3	42.3	60.0	70.7	40.5	55.3	65.6	40.0	52.7	60.8	41.5	50.5
20–24	91.0	38.1	63.9	89.9	42.4	65.7	88.0	45.1	66.2	76.4	41.3	58.1

These data show clearly that young people under twenty years of age were being crowded from the work world before the onset of the depression of the 1930's. The trend was well under way during the prosperous decade of the twenties.

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[1] These forces are very well described in American Youth Commission, *Youth and the Future,* Chap. 1, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1942; also, Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story,* p. 106, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1938. See also the Census of Unemployment of 1937.

INCOME AS A FACTOR IN FREEDOM FROM PARENTAL AUTHORITY

The elimination of child labor was essential at the beginning stage of the industrial revolution. There are many situations in which the exclusion of adolescents and youth also from the work world is desirable. On the other hand, it would seem that there are many points at which urban industrial society has gone to an extreme in this direction.

Work has many values aside from the purely economic. It is important that young people be introduced gradually into the work responsibilities and attitudes of adulthood. With work and a separate income also comes a growing sense of independence. Without earning power there can be little independence from the family. The saying "He who pays the piper calls the tune" is as true in the average family as elsewhere. As long as the parent pays the bills, his authority is likely to overshadow the activities of his child. With economic self-sufficiency, the child begins to evade parental authority and to make independent decisions. Adulthood in the community is measured by the ability to make one's living. Handicaps in the way of adolescents and youth earning part of their way and learning to handle money and make decisions involving the spending of it are crippling factors in their development.

In WPA days of the thirties many youth could not take a job without seeing the parent dropped from his job, and thus they were denied the opportunity to move out from under parental authority and achieve economic maturity. In contrast was the experience of other youth who succeeded in finding nonrelief jobs but whose parents were unemployed. On them was thrown the economic responsibility of the family so that they were forced to shoulder the full burdens of economic adulthood without being able to marry and establish independent families of their own. Both of these situations create difficulties for youth.

The Maryland youth study of the middle thirties [2] showed that about one in five youths, sixteen to twenty-four years of age, was helping support or completely supporting his parents. In only about a third of these cases was the help considered necessary. Boys were more often helping to support their parents than girls. Twenty-five per cent of the boys, as compared with 13 per cent of girls, were contributing to parents' support.

The extent to which the group sixteen to twenty-four years of age assumed financial responsibility depended a great deal on the occupation of the family. Only 9.3 per cent of those in professional and technical families were contributing to them. At the other extreme, a third of the children in farm-labor households made financial contributions to the families.

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[2] Bell, *op. cit.,* pp. 26–29.

A part of the marriage boom of the Second World War period was brought about by the consummation of thousands of marriages postponed during the depression decade because of such factors.

In the modern urban environment the need of the young adolescent for money in connection with school, recreation, transportation, etc., is a constant drain on the family budget, even in middle-class families, to say nothing of families in the low-income classes. The Lynds pointed out that in Middletown [3] almost thirty years ago children in all occupational classes carried money earlier and carried more of it than their parents did when they were young. Middletown high-school boys and girls indicated that spending money was a source of disagreement between them and their parents. Thirty-seven per cent of 348 high-school boys indicated this was a point of friction and 29 per cent of 382 girls.

In the urban young person's quest for status in the peer group and for recognition by and association with the opposite sex, pecuniary values are likely to rate very highly. The ability to own an automobile or to drive their parents' car, to have money for the show and soda fountain, for the dance, plays, athletic games, and other recreational activities, most of which are now commercialized, makes money important to school youths long before they are able to earn it for themselves. In a peer group the boy's rating among the girls is determined in part by the amount of money he is able to spend, and the favors of a girl's association are likely to be most accessible, other things being equal, to the young man whose parents are able or willing to provide a liberal cash allowance.

In all these situations one must take into account, then, that spending money is an important status-gaining device.

It is true that money as a status-gaining device does not always accomplish the end desired. This is especially true when the youth tries to use it as a means of compensating for feelings of inferiority in other lines and goes to a snobbish extreme that fails to bring him the favorable attention he seeks. A college youth, analyzing his experience in using money as a device for compensating for his lack of ability in sports and group play, used money in an attempt to gain status but, failing, was driven to seek introverted satisfactions.

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[3] Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown*, p. 141, Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., New York, 1929.

> Because I was the only child and my dad was making a fairly good living, I was able to afford a better bicycle and spend a little more money on candy and such things than my playmates. This separated me from them all the more, and being in a small community I could not change my play group. Thus I developed several defense mechanisms against what I thought was a hostile attitude. I became independent and kept to myself, read books for recreation, and attempted to make playmates jealous by a new bicycle, clothes, and extra money. That this was wrong and did not work can easily be seen.

Corresponding to the urban situation is the situation of rural youths who also need money in their contacts with town and city school systems and recreational institutions. Farm parents plan to use the labor of their children, but much less often provide for a regular allowance and for experience in the use of money. A common source of conflict between farm parents and their older children is money.

Even older farm youth, who make such major contributions to the earning of family income that they should be taken in as partners on the farm, often are given practically no return from the joint enterprise. Usually the parent assumes that the youth who is making the contribution to the labor will ultimately inherit the farm, but the youth may find little satisfaction in this when his present social relationships demand money. He is also worried by the fact that not only he but all the children alike will inherit the farm, those who have moved on to the city as well as he who has stayed to help on the farm.

The direct conflict over work has been solved in more progressive farm homes by work arrangements between father and son which provide for sharing the income from the farm, bonuses for the son if he is paid wages, tenancy arrangements, full or limited partnership, and provisions for the inheritance of the farm by the son or daughter who remains on the farm to help operate it.[4]

OCCUPATION AND PERSONALITY

We too seldom think of the profound effect of occupation upon personality. The author was never sufficiently impressed with this fact until one day when he was walking down the street of a large city and noticed a man in a laundry truck drive up to the curb and climb out to unload packages. The figure bore a striking resemblance to a widely photographed monarch whose picture appears in the press of all literate nations of the world. He had about the same stoop of shoulder, the same profile, the same smile. Whether the men were of equal ability as well as of similar appearance is not known, but men in equally divergent occupations could, if circumstances in their lives had been different, readily have been in each other's places, carrying on each other's occupation. In America there are many drivers of laundry trucks who have ability equal to that of monarchs who rule great empires, but their life organizations are entirely different. The personality of each is shaped by his task. The code of conduct for each is prescribed by his different social role.

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[4] For an excellent study of this problem, read R. C. Headington and H. R. Moore, "Father-Son Farming Arrangements: Plans and Arrangements," *Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 686, February, 1949.

Vocation in adulthood becomes one of the most significant keys to personality in a complex society, for the vocation is, in fact, a personality former. One's vocation determines in a major sense the core values of one's life, the kind of things one rates most highly. Vocation becomes a key to mental processes, to the routine of life habits, time of rising and retiring, kind of reading matter, lack of reading matter. Associations are largely within the vocation.

Vocation has much to do with a man's happiness. A psychiatrist of unquestioned reputation, in lecturing to a group, told of cases that had come to him with hysterical symptoms. Among them none was more interesting than that of a wealthy young attorney of New York City who, when he came to the clinic, described his pains as centered for the most part in his digestive apparatus. A thorough examination proved that there was nothing wrong organically. Upon questioning it was learned that the attacks always came after a strenuous court case. Further questioning revealed that the man hated his work and had never wanted to enter it. His father was a man who told his children what they were to do and saw that they did it. It soon came out that he disliked and dreaded his work and that he had always wanted to live an outdoor life. Under the advice of the psychiatrist he called his father, told him that hereafter he was going to live his own life, and then made arrangements to go into a lumber camp with a friend. For the first time he faced the future of his dreams, and his days at the clinic were ended.[5]

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[5] Although this case may seem unusual to some, it is probably representative of many similar ones. For a fascinating study of the effect of emotional experience on physical ailments, see W. W. Alvarez, *Nervousness, Indigestion and Pain,* rev. ed., Harper & Brothers, New York, 1943.

It is for these reasons and not for economic reasons alone that the choice of a vocation is of critical importance in the life of the modern individual. In fact, it is for these reasons primarily, rather than for economic reasons, that the choice of one vocation over another is of utmost importance. No amount of money can make a vocation compatible to one's temperament, interests, and habit system.

The fact remains that many parents are inclined to consider the choice of a vocation primarily from the standpoint of economic security or status of the position, overlooking the fact that for the youth the vocation must first of all satisfy his basic interests and emotions. Happiness and satisfaction in life are likely to be determined as much by the job as by marriage. This is as true for the woman who spends her life in a gainful occupation as it is for the man.

The job is not only a means through which the male acquires a considerable part of his social status but also the prime avenue through which he expresses creative energy. Through its routines and habits, he achieves the basic satisfactions that come from accomplishment. In the kinds of relations it inevitably imposes upon him, he makes many of his most important adjustments to social groups.

It is for some of these reasons that vocational choice takes on great significance in the life pattern of the adolescent and youth. It is for these reasons, also, that some degree of choice on their part and some degree of experimentation are desirable.

WORK AND STATUS

Personal worth is rated in our culture to a considerable extent by the kind of job one holds and by the amount of money it returns in the way of salary or wages. Different jobs have different prestige values as well as different money values. It is not always true that the job that produces the most money rates the highest in prestige. Almost the opposite is true with many jobs in America. The professions are rated relatively high from the standpoint of prestige and yet do not produce so large an income as certain other occupations. Many skilled workmen, for example, make considerably more money than the average teacher or even the college professor in the lower academic ranks.

Prestige values of particular jobs change quickly in our society. During the great depression several studies of the vocational interests of youth showed that a much higher proportion wanted to get into white-collar and professional jobs than society could expect to have in these positions. The prestige values of these jobs were probably reflected in these choices. In wartime, on the other hand, welders and other overalled workers in shipyards, airplane factories, etc., were highly regarded, so that not only men but women flocked to these jobs by the thousands, proud to come home on the streetcars in dirty clothes with their identification badges pinned to their overall bibs or cap bills. So it is that in different periods social pressures tend to modify group evaluations and, consequently, youth's vocational desires.

Many times these social pressures are distorted and have little relationship to the actual needs of society for workers in a given field. It would seem that the school has a responsibility in this regard, trying to give adolescence and youth more realistic views of the kinds of jobs which the majority of them can expect to enter.

CLIMBING THE ECONOMIC LADDER AS A FACTOR IN THE ADJUSTMENT OF YOUTH

In our contemporary open-class society, which permits shifting from one socioeconomic level to another, occupation tends not only to determine social status but also informal types of association. Interest groups and informal association groups in urban society are for the most part made up of those engaged in similar occupations rather than of those who live nearby, as is true in rural societies. For this reason, people who differ rather decidedly in background are likely to be thrown together in informal social participation.

Youth, as they climb upward through our open-class society, find themselves thrown from one sociooccupational group to another. There is, as a consequence, the necessity of adjustment to the standards, codes, and social ideologies of the new social groups. The farm youth, for example, who enters the professions will find his life patterns and group associations vastly different from what they would have been had he stayed in the parental occupation.

George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion* described some of the difficulties of this process of social climbing strikingly. Higgins, professor of phonetics, takes Eliza Doolittle, a flower girl, from the streets and decides to reeducate her in speech habits, dress, and manners so that she can pass for a refined lady. After six months of experimental coaching, the great test came when she appeared as a guest at a garden party. She is "a triumph of art and the dressmaker," but gives herself away in every sentence she utters in spite of all her coaching.

The setting of this play was in English society, where lines between the classes are more clearly drawn than in America, but the play does illustrate the difficulties, mild by comparison in our culture, of acquiring new behavior patterns as young people climb the ladder from one occupational class to another.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Outline the social forces that have brought about the exclusion of youth from the work world.
2. Cite evidence of the exclusion of youth from the work world prior to the boom employment conditions of the Second World War.
3. Was this entirely a depression phenomenon? Explain.
4. What noneconomic value do work and income have for young people?
5. Show how money plays its part in the social status of an individual in his peer group.
6. Is income a problem for the farm youth? Explain.
7. Relate occupation to personality formation. To basic satisfactions in life.
8. Show how occupation has become a factor in social status in our society. Does the relative status of a given occupation change? Explain.
9. Explain how climbing the economic ladder may intensify problems of the adjustment of youth.

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CHAPTER 19

Finding a Place in the Work World

THE PROBLEM OF WORK-WORLD INITIATION

Initiation to the work world has become increasingly difficult. Apprenticeship to work is the natural experience of childhood in primary-group societies where people of all ages mingle in the common activities of life. Thus the child comes to a realistic understanding of what adult life holds for him and also learns the work folkways of his elders. Some vestiges of this kind of social experience carry over in contemporary farm life in spite of the encroaching influence of outside agencies, especially the school with its daily routine of study and its many extracurricular activities. The transfer to maturity comes more slowly even on the farm than it once did, although farm youths as compared to urban youths become habituated to work at a relatively early age.[1]

Since urban industrial society has developed to the point where there is no natural bridge between the play activities of childhood and the work activities of adulthood, any apprenticeship that is to be obtained must come through the school curriculum or after the young person is on the job. Town and city youth ordinarily have no contact with the parent's work and no way of acquiring intimate knowledge of it. This undoubtedly has created problems of far-reaching consequence to youth in town and city, but an even more serious problem is inherent in the situation of the farm-reared youth who would enter an urban vocation, for not only does he lack contact and experience with the urban vocation, but ordinarily he must enter a strange environment and undergo possible culture shock while becoming accommodated to the new life.

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[1] J. J. Lister and E. L. Kirkpatrick, studying the age at which farm as compared to other youth in Maryland took their first full-time job, found that one-fifth of the farm boys took their first full-time job at the age of fourteen. Less than half as many village, town, and city youth took a full-time job so early. *Rural Youth Speak,* American Youth Commission, Washington, D.C., Feb. 1, 1939.

Although the depression decade of the 1930's made it difficult for young people to attain any apprenticeship to work in that many could not obtain a job at all, the Social Research Service study[2] of high-school seniors in Michigan in 1948 showed that most of them had had work experience either on a part-time or full-time basis. The pictographic chart shows the results of this study.

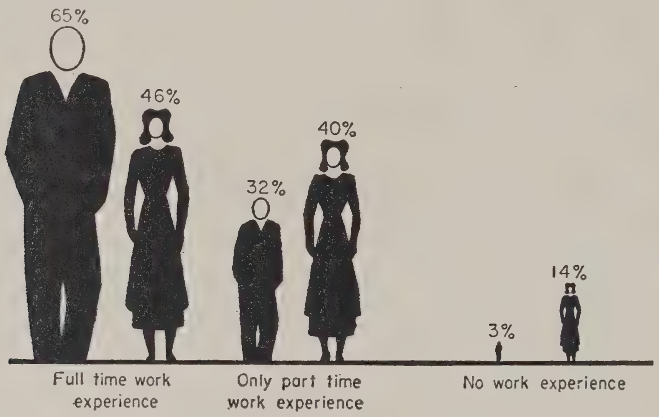

Fig. 38. Per Cent of High-school Seniors Who Have Had Work Experience, 1948. (*Social Research Service, Michigan State College.*)

This is clear evidence that in times of labor shortage young people do find work experience and thus attain some apprenticeship to work before leaving the secondary-school system.

THE CHOICE OF A JOB

Personal Motives. In a world of literally thousands of vocations, the problem of choosing a vocation is a real one. Over two-thirds of the employment counseling in the 1,700 local state employment offices in the United States is with youth under twenty (see Fig. 39). Studies of the American Youth Commission,[3] involving personal interviews with some 20,000 youths in sample areas throughout the nation, showed that, while some had a sense of realism in approaching their jobs, having been given adequate guidance by parents and counselors, they represented only a small minority. Most young people had some kinds of plans for themselves, but some had no ideas whatever of their vocational futures. The plans of many, however, were in the realm of wishful thinking and daydreams rather than tied closely to reality.

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[2] *Youth and the Work World,* Science Research Service, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Mich., 1949.

[3] Howard M. Bell, *Matching Youth and Jobs,* pp. 5–8, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1940.

The desire to get away from wearing overalls seemed to be prominent in their motivation. The commission concluded that guidance service was probably less well organized and operating less effectively than any other phase of secondary-school activity.

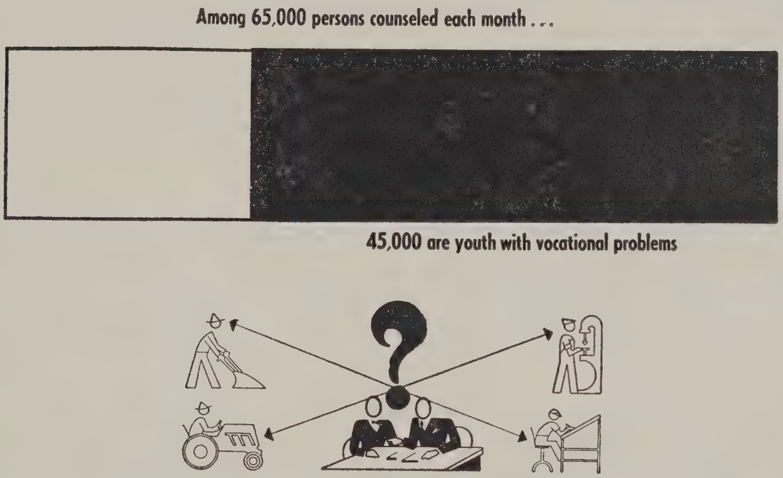

FIG. 39. MOST EMPLOYMENT COUNSELING ON VOCATIONAL PROBLEMS IS WITH TEENAGERS.

In the 1,700 local employment offices of the various states, more than two-thirds of those who come for counseling and aptitude tests are youth under twenty years of age. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

"To the wondering young person the aim and object of all education, schooling and culture," according to Payne,[4] "seems to be to come into a lot of money without working very hard for it."

Job selection is related to the motivations of youth. It is doubtful that economic reward is always most prominent. At least the more poorly paid occupations of the white-collar class seem to appeal to an endless stream of youth.

[4] Arthur F. Payne, *My Parents: Friends or Enemies?* p. 239, Brewer, Warren & Putnam, New York, 1932.

With many idealistic youth, the appeal of the job is primarily an appeal to discharge important service to humanity. This was so in the call to the mission field so prominent a generation or so ago, and is now true of the social-work profession. The ministry, teaching, medicine, and nursing offer the same appeal.

One important appeal of the professions and of clerical jobs is that of being able to go to work dressed up. The appeal of the secretarial position to many girls may be in part one of dress, in part the desire to work closely with others, particularly those of the opposite sex. Others are fascinated by the mechanical skills the work requires or the feeling of authority it gives. With many it is the position most readily accessible. Others learn typing and shorthand so they can fall back on it if necessary; it is a way to earn money while attending school, etc.

In some cases the appeal of the job is that of a uniform. It has always seemed to the author that a surprising number of farm boys attend colleges of agriculture and mechanical arts with the idea of majoring in engineering. There seems to be no logic behind it, because they very frequently do not have the mathematical ability required by the course. It is possible that back of these motivations are such incidental experiences as seeing surveyors in khaki uniforms working with their instruments along some highway in a local community. It is possible that the uniform is a part of the appeal of nursing to girls, also, as much as the service motive.

The author has never forgotten an incident at the time his brother and he entered the elevator of a Chicago hotel. A former high-school pupil of his brother's was the elevator boy, dressed in bright red uniform with gold trimmings. He looked at the brother with pride and said, "I've certainly gone up in the world since you knew me, haven't I?" He was a lad of immigrant stock who had, after high-school training, secured the job as elevator boy. To him it was the acme of success. Without the uniform, it is doubtful that the job would have offered the same degree of personal satisfaction.

Other positions are appealing because of the romance of travel that they offer. No doubt one of the common appeals of schoolteaching is the attraction of long vacations of which farm parents especially often speak with great respect, as they compare their year-in and year-out grind with that of the teacher whose hours they think close promptly at four o'clock and whose work week is five days and whose year is nine months. Similarly, parents often idealize the banker's job where they assume the hours are short and the work is easy.

All these evaluations, many of which are entirely erroneous, find expression in the conversation of parents, or in other ways come within the focus of youth's consideration and help provide motivation for seeking entry to given vocations.

The vocations of some are cut out in large part by their own peculiar temperaments and interests. The sole motive of some young persons in a choice of vocation is to be able to work alone. They want to be scientists shut away in laboratories or naturalists picking their way into the secrets of nature. With others a desire for independence is very prominent. Their ruling ambition is to do as they please. This is a common philosophy of farm life. To be one's own boss is considered by many farm youth a supreme objective.

To understand vocational motivation is to understand every form of human desire and wish. Some try to find themselves in their job; others try to lose themselves in it. Many make the choice lightly and without serious motivation, as is indicated by the following example taken from a student paper:

> When we were finished with high school, a very close friend and myself decided that we would like to study electrical engineering. Neither of us had money and both considered it rather unwise to try to go to school. Foolish, like many young people, we flipped a coin to determine whether we would try it. As a result, I am going to school.

Parental Projection. In the field of vocational choice the parental role is often too much a determining factor. Psychologists have developed the term "projection" to describe the tendency of parents to force their own evaluations upon their children. Students of projection find that parents are most likely to project their ambitions on their children in the vocational field.[5] Two types of parents are most guilty:

1. The parent who has been frustrated in his own vocation projects his ambition on his children. Having failed to achieve his own life goals, he expects his children to do it for him. For example, the father who wanted to be a doctor but never had the money to get the education and, therefore, has had to be a merchant, may almost force his son to enter medical school. The mother who wanted to be a missionary, but who instead married a professor, may wish her daughter to be a missionary.

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[5] Kimball Young, "Parent Child Relationship: Projection of Ambition," *The Family*, 8:67–73, 1927.

2. The parent who is so completely absorbed by his vocation and supremely happy in it may not be able to imagine his children being happy in any other vocation.

The following cases illustrate parental projection and the reaction of the youth toward it:

> My father developed an absolute obsession that every one of his eight sons should be farmers, in his later years. This influenced my choice only indirectly —that is, in his wishing to force farming upon me, he made the vocation extremely odious to me—but nevertheless the fact that he managed to keep me there from ages sixteen to twenty-two seems to have won me to the cause of agriculture or something to that effect. I really believe that back of it all was a fear that by living in town and going to high school the family was becoming foppish, lightheaded, and wishing to live beyond their means.

> My father wanted to make me a druggist. He thought the constant association with the drugstore while I was young would help, but it had the opposite effect. Youthful rebellion resulted. The exact opposite attracted and gave me the opinion that I had mechanical abilities. I know now that my mental makeup is such that the abstract and scientific nature of pharmacy is more suitable to me than the concrete nature of engineering. My father learned on me, however, and made a very good druggist out of my brother.

The third case, of brother and sister, turned out rather badly.

> My father is a successful doctor. He insists that I be a nurse, and that Joe, my twin brother, be a doctor. He sent us to school and insisted that we register in courses leading to these professions. Both of us are primarily interested in athletics and coaching. I am continuing my work but find that I have no interest in nursing. My brother tried medicine but became so disgusted with his college course that he got into trouble and was expelled from school.

The Elias[6] study shows clearly that well over a third of young people consider the parental occupation "as a life occupation for me" either "rather unsatisfactory" or "very unsatisfactory." The following question, with five alternative responses, was asked of 5,500 Washington high-school seniors: "As a life occupation for me, I consider my parents' occupation to be . . ." Responses to the alternatives are given in Table 23.

It is probable that in our society mothers are more often tempted to project their ambitions on their children than are fathers, for mothers are more often thwarted in ambition and have need for realizing their ambitions

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[6] L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems,* The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., January, 1949.

TABLE 23. *Responses of 5,500 High-school Seniors Who Checked the Statement: "As a life occupation for me, I consider my parents' occupation to be"*

Response	Boys, per cent	Girls, per cent
An ideal occupation	8.9	6.4
Very satisfactory	15.9	18.5
Fairly satisfactory	31.9	30.3
Rather unsatisfactory	25.1	20.4
Very unsatisfactory	16.1	21.2

through their children. They had barely tasted vocational success when marriage and motherhood terminated their careers. Some always experience resentment against their fate and try to pick a career for their sons or daughters, or at least to prejudice their daughters against marriage and in favor of a career.

Work with college students leads the author to believe that comparatively few parents take extreme positions. The common methods of projection, as judged from the autobiographies of students, are: directing the selection of a school course that leads to what the parents consider a desirable type of work; expressing anxiety or hope that the child will enter a certain line of work; praising success in those activities which point toward the vocation considered desirable by the parent; discouraging entrance into some types of work by calling attention to undesirable features; promising to provide the initial capital for business, farming, or some other work; suggesting several desirable alternatives and calling attention to advantages and disadvantages of each; and idealizing the desired profession in the home.

It is apparent from these autobiographies that parents frequently take into account such factors as social status and economic reward. They wish their children to pursue work that is dignified and that pays well. Often they express the hope that their children may have an easier life than they have had.

Parental projection is not harmful, providing the final choice is left to the child. Children more often follow their parents' vocations than other vocations.[7] In fact, they are more than two and a half times as likely to enter the parental occupation as an outside one (see Fig. 40). There is a great advantage in doing so, providing the vocation fits the needs, interests, and ambitions of the child. But the decision should be the child's, not the parent's. The admonition of the Talmud is appropriate counsel: "Limit not thy children to thine own desire. They were born in a different time."

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[7] See W. A. Anderson, "The Transmission of Farming as an Occupation," *Cornell Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 768, Ithaca, N.Y., 1941; also, Noel P. Gist,

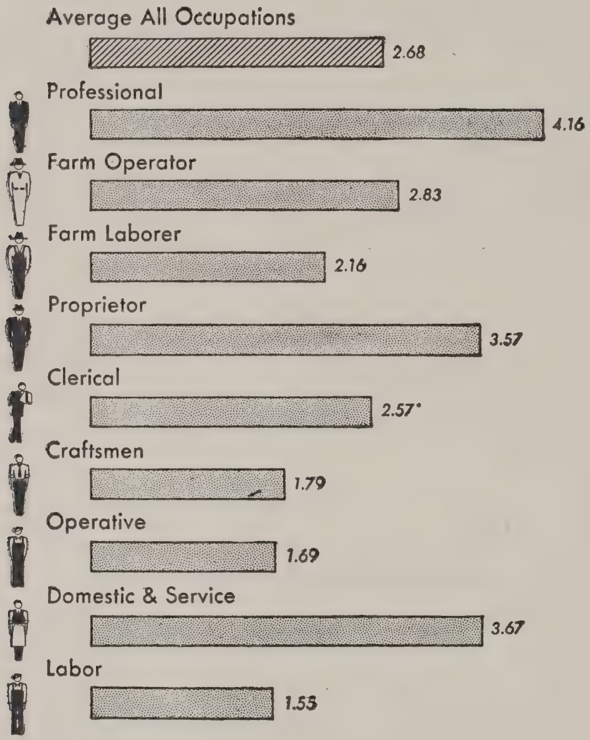

Fig. 40. An Index of Occupational Heredity.

An index of 1.00 in the chart would indicate that youth are as likely to enter their fathers' occupations as any others; of more than 1.00, that they are more likely to enter their fathers' occupations. Data are for 7,703 young men. Compare their occupations after an average period of five years out of school with those of their fathers. (*From Landis, Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 449, *July,* 1944.)

C. T. Pihlbad, and Cecil L. Gregory, *Selective Factors in Migration and Occupation,* Chap. 5, Vol. XVIII, University of Missouri Studies, Columbia, Mo., 1943; also, Paul H. Landis, "The Territorial and Occupational Mobility of Washington Youth," *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 449, Pullman, Wash., July, 1944.

Trial and Error. Change of vocational choice is frequent throughout the period of adolescence and youth. The nature of these changes is illustrated in the responses of college students to a question concerning the number of changes in vocational choices they had so far made.

> *Girls:*
>
> I have changed my mind quite a few times, but I don't know whether it was just a fad or a desire to be these things. I wanted to be an aviatrix once, but it would cost too much money, so I gave that up. Once I wanted to be a nurse, but my sisters talked me out of that. I've wanted to be a teacher for a long time—since I was in the eighth grade.
>
> I've changed six times. At first I wanted to be a nurse. Quite a few of the girls who graduated with me decided to go into nurses' training. They were very enthusiastic about it. My sister and my family discouraged that. I wanted to be a schoolteacher when I was about twelve and a movie star, etc.
>
> At ten I wanted to be a bookkeeper; at about fifteen or sixteen I wanted to be a math teacher—this was because I liked my high-school math so well; at seventeen I decided to take a commercial course since I could not major in math and then my father suggested that it would be more worth while to take commerce for stenographic purposes; at nineteen I decided I wanted to teach commerce.
>
> I once considered majoring in clothing and design in hopes that I'd eventually be a style specialist, but the openings for such a position require so much experience and the cost of preparation is so great that I changed to education which offered sooner returns. I also thought of dietetics but my sister, who is a nurse, dissuaded me. As a child I had splurges of wanting to be a great singer, actress, and missionary.
>
> First, I wished to be a nurse when quite small, but this was just an idea. Then I wished to be a secretary. Since giving this up, I have decided on the teaching vocation.
>
> Four times I've changed. I have, after deciding on a vocation, had some experience in the chosen field and decided I did not like it. On the last one, I had the experience first and chose afterward.
>
> *Boys:*
>
> I've changed three times—once I made up my mind to be an M. D. (age eleven). Then I decided to be an engineer (age fourteen). I now believe that I should like to be an M. D. and a psychiatrist, but I will not decide until I have made a thorough investigation of my abilities and interests in the vocation.

> Many times; it has been very difficult for me to decide this question. Lack of training has kept me from entering some fields. It has been a constant problem to know what to enter. Choices have ranged from a chemist to a psychologist, and from a captain of industry to a salesman. But the general aim has been toward business. If it were not for lack of funds for further education, necessity of earning a living, and a few other minor things, I would go on now and study to be a vocational director. I am very interested in this field and believe it to be one of great opportunity—this is my second choice. I will have to accept it as a hobby.
>
> Many times. I have decided upon many vocations before arriving at this one. I have talent in music, art, and mechanics, so I naturally felt a desire for a vocation in all of these fields. The vocation I chose combines art and mechanics. Music can be taken up as a hobby.
>
> A number of times. The longer I attend school, the less I know as to what I want to do.
>
> At the age of six I wanted to be a painter. At the age of ten a trader and trapper. By the time I was fifteen I was torn between the desire to be an electrician, for which I had considerable aptitude, and that of being a piano player, at least equal to Paderewski, for which profession I had no talent whatsoever and less opportunity of instruction.
>
> The thought of bringing a young woman out to live amid the dreariness and drudgery of farm life made me dread agriculture as a vocation, unless one could be a large "gentleman" farmer. I still want to do some writing. I believe that this is because of a desire for self-assertion and recognition to compensate for the feeling that the vocation of farming sets up the idea in the minds of other people that "one is a farmer because he cannot be anything else. . . ."

We have appropriately stressed problems of vocational choice. The unfortunate fact remains, in spite of the fact that adolescents and youths are always choosing, that many have no real choice. They have to take the only job that is available. In many isolated rural communities this means farming. The job is imposed upon them by the necessities of the parent. There is the farm job to do, and there is no way to escape from it. Urban youth more often have a choice, but even their choice is limited by ability, training, and available work opportunities. Sons and daughters of many poorly paid industrial workers must often leave school early to help provide for the family. John K. Norton, Professor of Educational Administration, Columbia University, in his address before the National Education Association in 1951—a time of great national prosperity—said, "Contrary to popular opinion there are thousands of able and willing youth who are prematurely eliminated from school because their family situation does not permit them to continue." Having little training and lacking experience and maturity, they are forced to take whatever job is available.

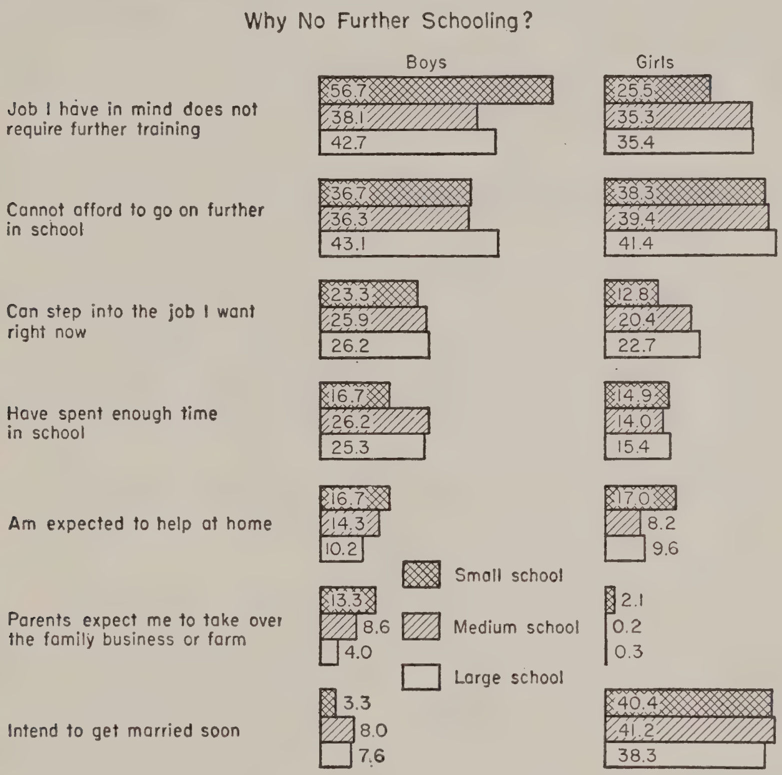

FIG. 41. REASONS FOR PLANNING NO SCHOOLING BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL.

Of 4,500 graduating high-school seniors in the state of Washington, 1,450 planned no further schooling. Here are the reasons given, classified by size of school attended. Note the high proportion who felt they could not afford further schooling. Data are for the prosperous year 1947. (*Carol Larson Stone, "Size of School as a Factor in the Adjustment of High School Seniors," Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 511, *Pullman, Wash., November,* 1949.)

A study of 4,500 graduating seniors in the state of Washington in the prosperous year of 1947 showed that well over a third of both boys and girls felt that they could not afford further schooling (see Fig. 41). The proportions were highest among those in larger school systems which are generally located in cities.

The perplexities of vocational choice so common in modern society are primarily a problem of the gifted and the privileged. For them it is difficult to narrow down interests to a limited range of activities, such as most vocations require. Moreover, such youth with a variety of talents or broad training are capable of doing many tasks with a reasonable degree of efficiency and skill. For them the problem of guidance is a major one.

But even these often choose wrongly. I suppose every teacher has had the experience of having a young person in high school or college come to him for a recommendation in a field in which he feels the young person will most certainly not succeed or in some cases even though he does succeed will not be satisfied. There is always the question of what to do and always the quandary as to how young people can arrive at this point and have so little appreciation of their interests and abilities. No doubt an adequate guidance program would cure this situation, but the situation must be recognized as a common one today.

A further discussion of the school's responsibility appears in a later chapter.

ENTRANCE TO THE CHOSEN VOCATION

It is one thing to choose a vocation, another to find a place in it. In the United States the labor union is becoming a powerful force to reckon with in industry. This complicates the problems of economic adjustment for many rural youth who migrate to cities and who are in many cases antilabor in philosophy.[8]

Urban youth who entered the labor market as wage workers have the advantage over farm youth and youth from the clerical, professional, and proprietorial fields in that they are more favorable to unions, since union membership is a requisite to entrance to many such jobs, perhaps to most of them. A Michigan State College study [9] shows that even in that state, where the automobile industry is centered and where union activities are carried out on a large scale, differences in the attitudes of the various occupational groups toward unions exist (see Fig. 42). It will be seen that children of manual workers, who more often have direct experience with unions, more often favor compulsory union membership than do the other groups.

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[8] This antilabor philosophy of rural youths and adolescents, as well, and its influence in complicating economic adjustment for farm people who change localities, have been discussed in several of the author's studies.

[9] *Youth and the World of Work,* Social Research Service, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Mich., 1949.

This study shows in general that the larger the city, the greater the support of the union shop. This holds true for both boys and girls.

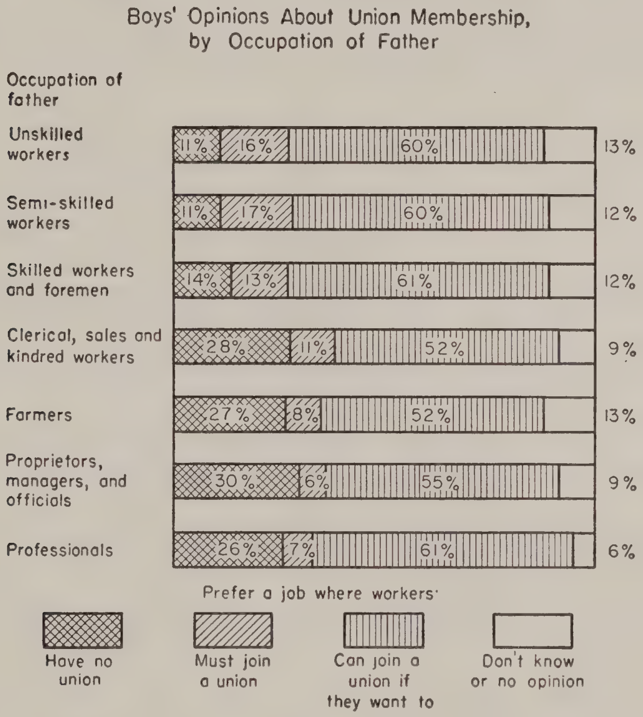

FIG. 42. SONS OF URBAN MANUAL WORKERS MORE OFTEN FAVOR UNION MEMBERSHIP. (*Social Research Service, Michigan State College.*)

This same study approached youth's reaction to labor unions in another way. The young people studied were asked what they would do if they were refused a deserved raise by an employer. Figure 43 presents the reactions of the youth in homes with various occupational backgrounds. Note that for the most part those in the farm, professional, managerial, and clerical groups would work harder. Few would help organize a union to attack their problem. Among those engaged in manual labor, however, a considerable proportion would attack the problem in this way.

Much of vocational training, even in the urban school, and practically all of what little exists in rural schools ignore the union as an important influence in economic adjustment in contemporary life. Commenting on this situation, Tead makes the following pertinent statement:[10]

> The whole vocational guidance and counseling movement has, indeed, now reached a point where its future seems relatively sterile and unproductive *unless* it will work deliberately with, in, and through the labor unions to raise the whole level of the vital vocational adjustment process to a democratic, functionally integrated plane—a plane that pulls together guidance, placement, acceptable terms of work, and strong, autonomous worker groups.

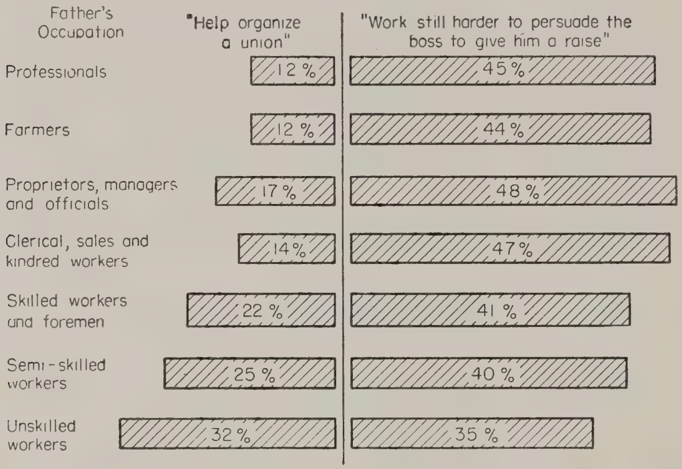

Fig. 43. Sons of Urban Manual Workers Would More Often Organize a Union to Adjust a Wage Grievance. (*Social Research Service, Michigan State College.*)

Lack of available farms hinders from farming many who would prefer agriculture. Being unable to farm, they turn to urban work as an alternative. Each year between 150,000 and 200,000 farm young people reach the age of eighteen with no prospect of farming, for no farms are available. In 1920, for example, 160,000 farmers died or passed the age of sixty-five; and during the same year, 337,000 farm boys reached the age of eighteen, thus leaving a surplus of 177,000. Likewise, in 1930 the surplus of farm youth coming to maturity was 201,000.

During the years 1940 to 1950, 1,824,000 men twenty-five to sixty-nine years of age in the rural farm population died or reached retirement age

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[10] Ordway Tead, "Youth and the Labor Unions," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 194:42–47, November, 1937.

(seventy years).[11] To replace them 3,039,000 youth reached their twenty-fifth birthday, a ratio of 167 young men to every 100 operators leaving agriculture. The situation varied considerably for states and regions as is graphically shown in Fig. 44.

Forced delay in entering lifework is prominent periodically in both urban and rural society, because of limited work opportunities. Often there is a period of waiting between school and employment, there being more or less blind stumbling about of many young people who are not fitted to enter the occupational world or who can find no appropriate opening. Many maladjustments are inherent in this situation. Those who are thwarted occupationally are likely to be thwarted in marriage, because marriage, as well as social status, group association, and general happiness, is very much conditioned by economic factors.

During the depression of the 1930's home demonstration workers, in a study of rural girls in North Carolina who had left school but who had not entered any definite occupation, found them generally dissatisfied and unhappy. This situation seemed to prevail regardless of the social level of the families. Associated with their inability to become self-supporting and to find a new status were conflicts with parents over clothes and spending money. Most of the girls thought their role in life was hard and wanted to see a new side of life. Frequently their parents had no sympathy with this desire, fearing that it might involve them in financial obligations. These girls seemed to be developing a dislike of country life because of social disadvantages, loneliness, lack of chance for self-improvement, and because they had little opportunity to meet new people or to express social and recreational desires. Many were unhappy because of unfamiliarity with social conventions.[12]

In summing up this chapter and laying the groundwork for the next, we can do no better than to let youth speak concerning their vocational problems and anxieties. Presented a list of 30 common problems in the vocational field, 5,500 seniors facing graduation checked those which were important to them. The proportions of boys and girls checking each item is shown in Table 24. "Making something of myself," "concerned about the future,"

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[11] Conrad Taeuber, *Replacement Rates for Rural-farm Males Aged* 25 *to* 69 *Years by Counties,* 1940–1950 (mimeographed), U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., December, 1944.

[12] N. Miller, "Out-of-school Girls in a Rural County," *Journal of Home Economics,* 25:467–483, July, 1933.

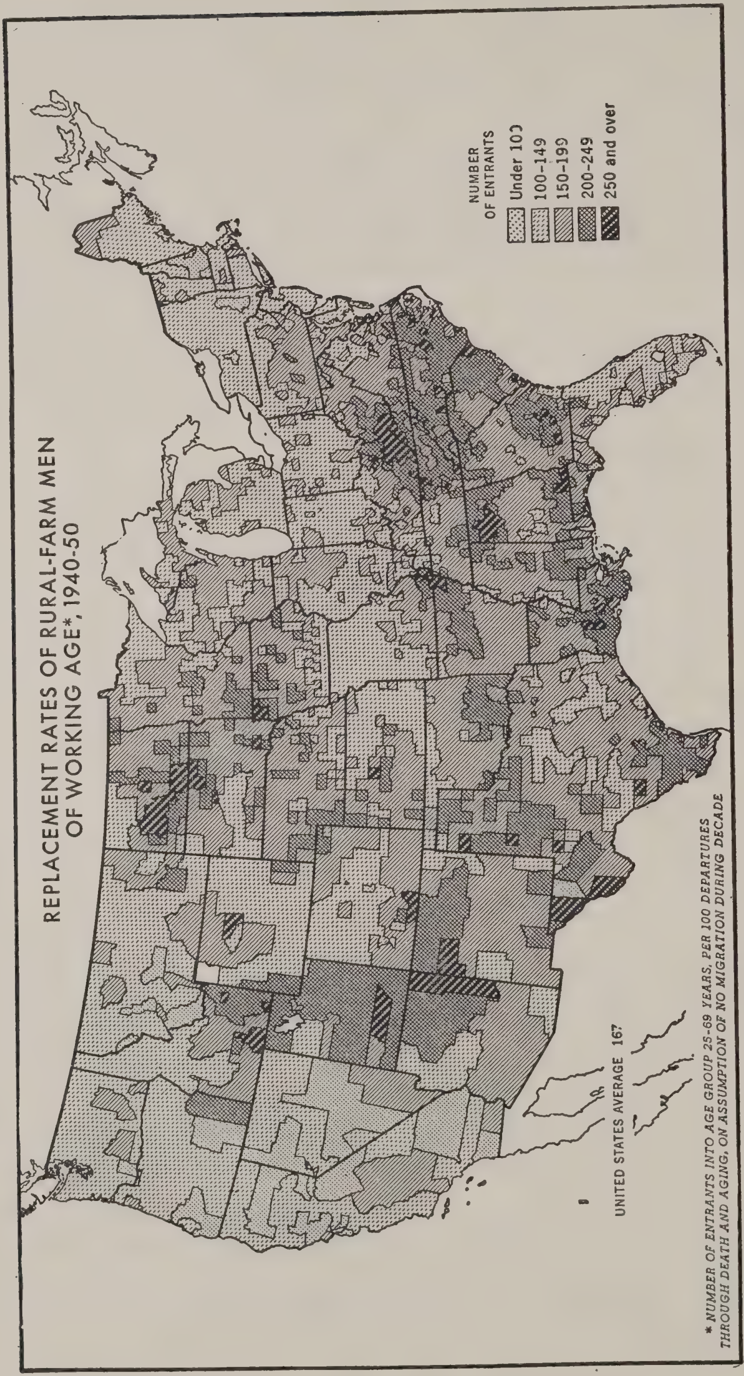
REPLACEMENT RATES OF RURAL-FARM MEN
OF WORKING AGE*, 1940-50
NUMBER OF ENTRANTS
Under 100
100-149
150-199
200-249
250 and over
UNITED STATES AVERAGE 167
* NUMBER OF ENTRANTS INTO AGE GROUP 25-69 YEARS, PER 100 DEPARTURES THROUGH DEATH AND AGING, ON ASSUMPTION OF NO MIGRATION DURING DECADE

FIG. 44. IN MOST PARTS OF THE COUNTRY YOUNG MEN ON FARMS COMING TO MATURITY FAR EXCEED THE NUMBER OF FARMERS REACHING RETIREMENT AGE.

TABLE 24. *Percentage of 5,500 High-school Seniors Who Checked Certain Vocational Problems* *

Vocational problem	Boys	Girls
Making something of myself	25.4	27.1
Concerned about the future	25.7	26.4
Choosing a vocation	30.9	19.3
What job best suited for	26.9	21.8
Don't know what I really want	22.5	23.9
Don't know what I want to be	20.9	18.3
Whether to go to college	22.2	17.0
Don't want to depend on anyone	14.9	14.9
Want advice to choose vocation	13.0	10.4
Do not know my abilities	11.5	11.1
Choosing marriage or a career	2.8	16.8
Afraid I won't succeed	8.0	12.1
Worried about getting a job	7.5	11.5
Need for vocational training in high school	10.4	8.3
Growing up	5.0	10.5
Not much choice of jobs here	6.7	7.3
Want to start at something new	6.5	6.9
School not giving preparation	7.1	5.6
Graduating and not ready for job	6.3	6.1
Don't know how to look for job	2.8	5.9
Parents dislike my chosen job	3.3	4.8
Parents picking my vocation	2.8	3.3
Afraid I can't handle a job	1.5	4.0
Job interferes with activities	3.3	2.4
Don't like work	3.0	1.2
Job will take me from home	1.3	2.5
Marry before finishing school	1.1	2.3
Quitting school training for job	1.1	0.4
Want to leave school for a job	0.9	0.5
Have to quit school to work	0.4	0.3

* L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems*, The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., January, 1949.

"choosing a vocation," "what job best suited for," "don't know what I want to be," are of concern to almost one in four of all youth.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Under what condition is the transfer from childhood to the work world easier for the farm child than for the urban child? Under what condition is it more difficult?

2. How has industrial culture affected the ease of acquiring experience in the work world?

3. Is the average youth given sufficient vocational education or guidance to help him choose his life's work intelligently? Support your answer with proof.

4. Illustrate personal motives that operate to determine the choice of jobs.

5. What is meant by projection? Show how it operates to influence the vocational choice of youth.

6. Under what conditions are parents most likely to be set on determining the child's vocation for him?

7. What are some of the unselfish motives that enter into projection? Give examples.

8. Illustrate the trial and error young people experience in choosing a vocation.

9. For what individual is vocation not a matter of choice? What individual is likely to have the greatest struggle with choosing a vocation?

10. Does the problem end with choice of a vocation? Explain.

11. Discuss the labor union as a factor in entry to a vocation.

12. What insurmountable difficulty faces many farm youths who want to stay in agriculture?

13. What are some of the more important problems of which high-school seniors are aware in the vocational field?

For Selected References see next chapter.

CHAPTER 20

Finding a Place in the Work World (Continued)

EDUCATION AS A VOCATIONAL GATEWAY

It may be stated as axiomatic that many occupations are available only to those who have the higher levels of education. And within many occupations the amount of education a youth possesses determines his advancement. It is very likely that the person with less than an eighth-grade education will have to seek work either in the poorly paid ranks of farm labor and unskilled labor or in domestic service. It is just as obvious that college training or more is important to entering and succeeding in any kind of professional career. The school has become one of the main social elevators by which socioeconomic status is improved. The Maryland youth study [1] shows clearly the positive relationship between educational success and amount of education and entry to the more desirable occupations (see Table 25). Various studies of relief indicate clearly that during the depression decade those with little education were most frequently crowded out in the competitive economic struggle.[2] Young people on relief, also, were primarily those with little education. Of urban youth on relief in 1935, over half had never attended high school.[3]

Education also has a definite bearing on income. The better educated generally have a greater range of choice of better paying jobs and progress faster in them.[4]

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[1] Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story,* pp. 92–97, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1938.

[2] For a graphic summary of the relationship between poverty and education, see *Rural Poverty,* Works Progress Administration, Washington, D.C., 1936.

[3] *Youth on Relief,* Fig. IX, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D.C., 1936.

[4] Bell, *op. cit.,* p. 13.

TABLE 25. *Occupational Distribution of Elementary, High-school, and College Graduates* *

Present occupation	Elementary school, per cent	High school, per cent	College, per cent
Professional-technical	1.0	4.1	58.9
Proprietary-managerial	1.3	3.4	9.8
Office-sales	7.9	46.1	22.9
Skilled	4.9	2.9	2.2
Semiskilled	30.3	22.4	3.2
Unskilled	31.6	8.9	1.1
Domestic-personal	15.2	9.3	1.1
Other	7.8	2.9	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story*, p. 123, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1938.

A study at the State College of Washington[5] makes the relationship between education and economic success very clear. The results for over 1,800 boys and 1,400 girls are presented in the chart opposite. It will be seen that the boys with greater education not only obtained better paying jobs but advanced more quickly during the period of five years, which was the average time interval between the first and the present job. For girls the difference between high-school graduation and less than high-school graduation is not consistent for the first job, although those who completed high school progressed to higher paying jobs with more experience. Those with more than high-school education rated considerably higher wages than either of the other two groups.

Our studies of the time required to reach maximum earning power also show that education is a deterministic factor in both rural and urban America (see Fig. 46). These studies are based on a special analysis by the United States Census Bureau[6] of wage and salary income, using the 17.5 million persons who had no other income exceeding $50 for the year 1939. In the chart we contrast, for simplicity, only the two extreme educational categories—college and no schooling. But grade and high school, respectively, fall in between these two extremes in order, the more schooling the higher the earning peak and the longer it takes to reach the top. Income for all groups is for 1939, and the trend lines are based on income of each age classification at that time.

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[5] Paul H. Landis, "The Territorial and Occupational Mobility of Washington Youth," *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 449, Pullman, Wash., July, 1944.

[6] "Urban and Rural Income by Age and Education," *Current Population Reports, Series P-46, No.* 5, June 18, 1946.

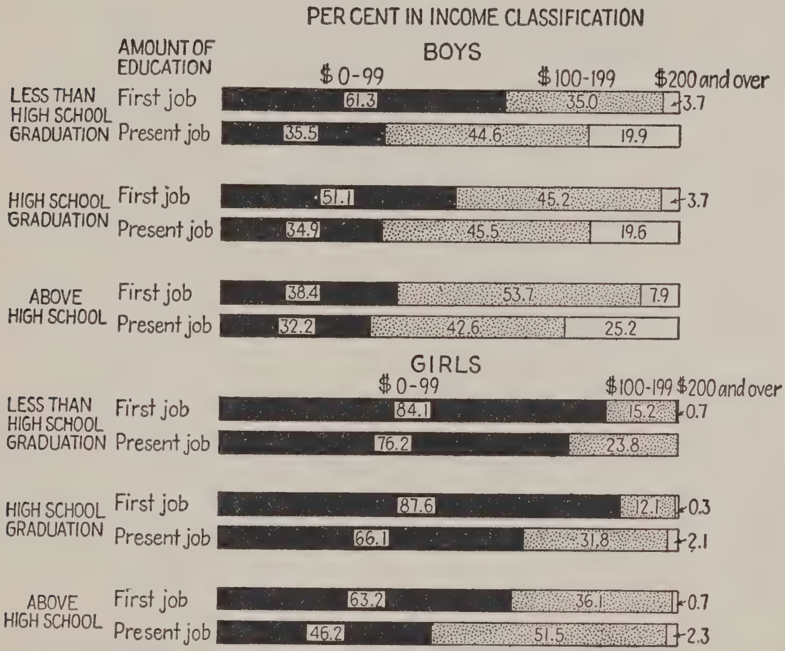

Fig. 45. Distribution of Young Men and Young Women by Rates of Pay Received on First Job and Present Job.

The study covered 3,251 youth, most of whom attended schools in the state of Washington. The average period elapsing between the first and the present job was five years. The better trained received better pay at the beginning and also advanced to better pay more rapidly with experience. (*Landis, Washington Experiment Station Bulletin* 449, *July*, 1944, *p.* 51.)

Data classifying wage and salary workers in the nation falling above and below $1,500 income in 1939 also show the striking difference between those of different educational attainments (see Fig. 47). Over a fourth of the college group fell in the $1,500 and over classification, few of those with grade school or less.

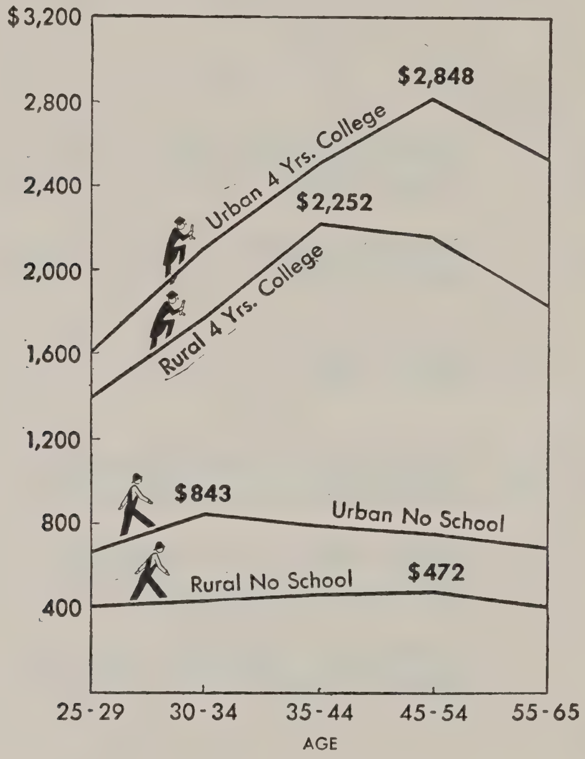

Fig. 46. Effect of Schooling on Economic Climbing.

Data are for male white wage and salary workers in the United States for the year 1939. Note that the earning peak is higher and the climb longer for those with more education. Education is an advantage for all age groups, and with increasing age the differential advantage becomes even greater than at the beginning of a work career. (*Landis, Journal of the National Education Association,* 38:366–368, *May,* 1949.)

INFORMATIONAL BACKGROUND PROVIDED FOR VOCATIONAL CHOICE

In respect to knowing about vocations and having vocational information, youth from large urban schools are at a decided advantage over those from small communities with their small school systems. A study[7] of some 4,500

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[7] Carol Larson Stone, "School-size as a Factor in the Adjustment of High School Seniors," *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 511, November, 1949.

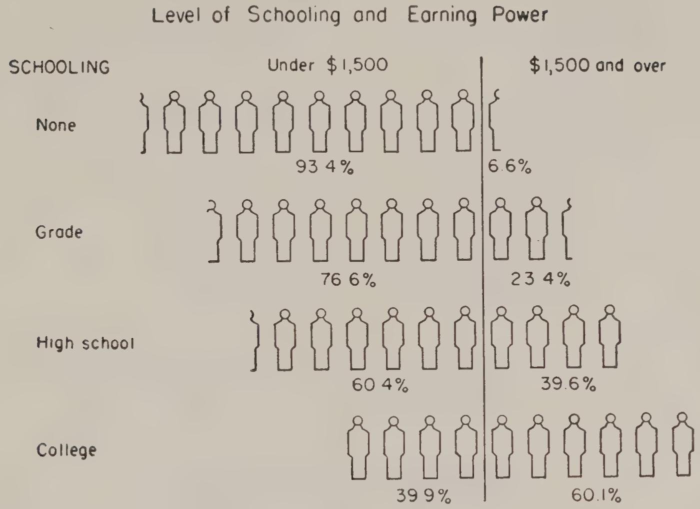

FIG. 47. EDUCATION INCREASES EARNING POWER.

Data are for the 17.5 million wage and salary workers and reflect income levels of 1939. Note the consistent relationships of education to earning power. Schooling opportunity is clearly related to earning opportunity. (*Landis, Journal of the National Education Association,* 38:366–368, *May,* 1949.)

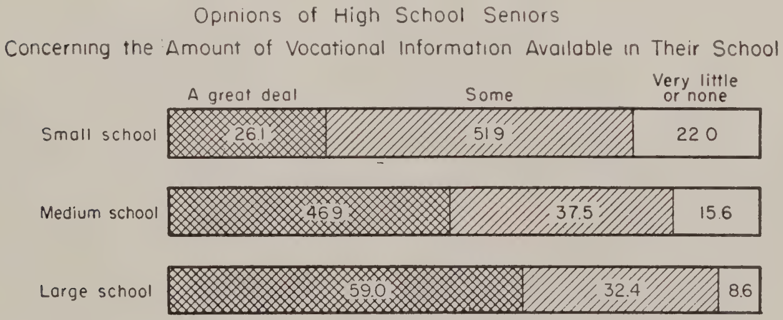

FIG. 48. SMALL SCHOOL SYSTEMS ARE SHORT ON VOCATIONAL INFORMATION.

Data are for 120 Washington high schools for 1948. (*Carol Larson Stone, "Size of School as a Factor in the Adjustment of High School Seniors," Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 511, *Pullman, Wash., November,* 1949.)

graduating seniors in the state of Washington in 1948 showed that more than twice as many from the large as from the small schools felt that they had had a great deal of vocational information available in their school (see Fig. 48).

Consistent with this vocational information, a considerably higher proportion of both boys and girls from large than from the small schools had made a choice of their future vocation (see Fig. 49).

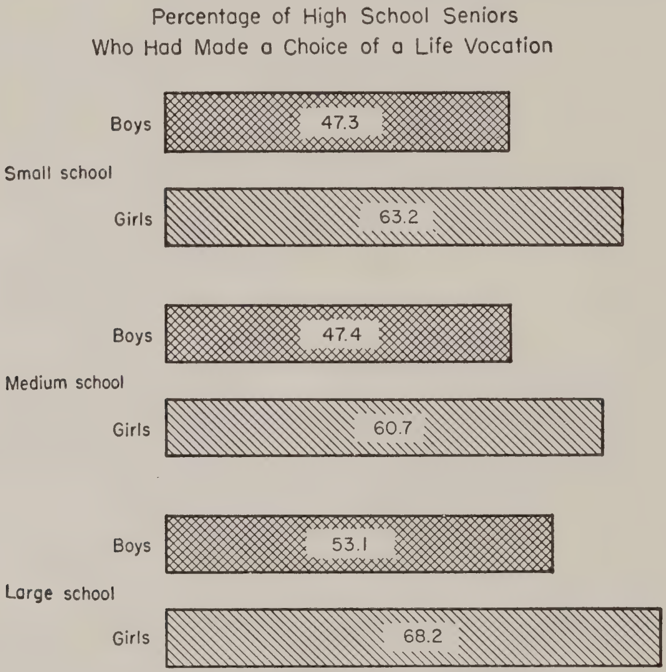

Fig. 49. Seniors in Large High Schools Have More Often Made a Vocational Choice. (*Carol Larson Stone, "Size of School as a Factor in the Adjustment of High School Seniors," Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 511, *Pullman, Wash., November,* 1949.)

Of all youth studied by Elias,[8] 5,500 high-school seniors, 54.4 per cent of boys and 61 per cent of girls felt that there was someone in their school capable of helping them make a vocational choice (see Fig. 50). Two-thirds of the boys and 77 per cent of the girls thought they had received sufficient information for making a satisfactory choice of a vocation.

[8] L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems,* The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., January, 1949.

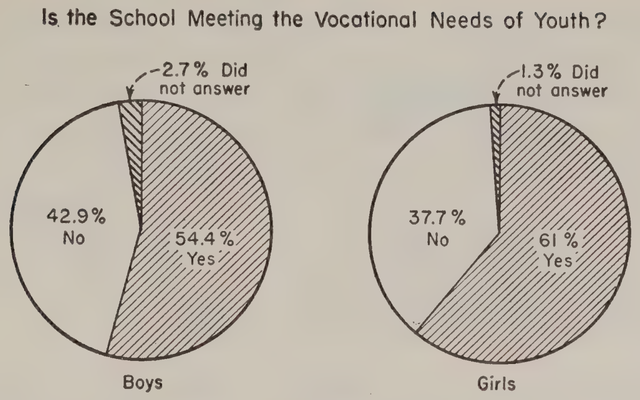

Fig. 50. More Than One-third Felt the School Was Not Meeting Vocational Needs.

This is the report of 5,500 seniors in high schools in the spring of their graduation year. (*L. J. Elias, High School Youth Look at Their Problems, College Bookstore, Washington State College, Pullman, Wash.,* 1949.)

FIELDS OF EMPLOYMENT OPEN TO YOUTH

During the depression years of the 1930's youth studies showed that very many young people were frustrated in entering vocations they wanted. Bell's study of employed young people,[9] which compared the kinds of jobs they actually engaged in with the jobs they would like to be in, showed marked discrepancies between the two (see Fig. 51). It is significant that professional, technical, and managerial positions found a major place in youth's wants, whereas office or sales, skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled jobs occupied the major portion of the youth. Whether this represented fundamental desires, or simply dissatisfaction with the particular job the youth were in and their daydreams concerning something more desirable, is debatable. The fact that the pattern of desired occupations for youth who had not yet entered the labor market was similar, however, would indicate that great numbers of youth reached the employment age with their work hopes built on illusions concerning the nature of job opportunities.

A Michigan State College Social Research Service study[10] of more than a thousand twelfth-grade high-school pupils in Michigan in 1948 compared both the vocational *aspirations* and *expectations* of youth with the 1940 distribution of male workers in the various occupations (see Fig. 52, opposite). Note that the professions occupied only 16 per cent of male workers but that 40 per cent of the boys wanted to be in the professions and 25 per cent expected to be. At the opposite extreme was the field of unskilled work, where 13 per cent of workers were employed but where only 3 per cent of these boys expected to be and where none aspired to be. The field of clerical, sales, and related work also merits comment. Only 8 per cent wanted and expected to be employed there, but the employment picture showed that probably almost a fourth of them would be engaged in these fields of work.

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[9] Bell, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[10] *Youth and the World of Work,* Social Research Service, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Mich., 1949.

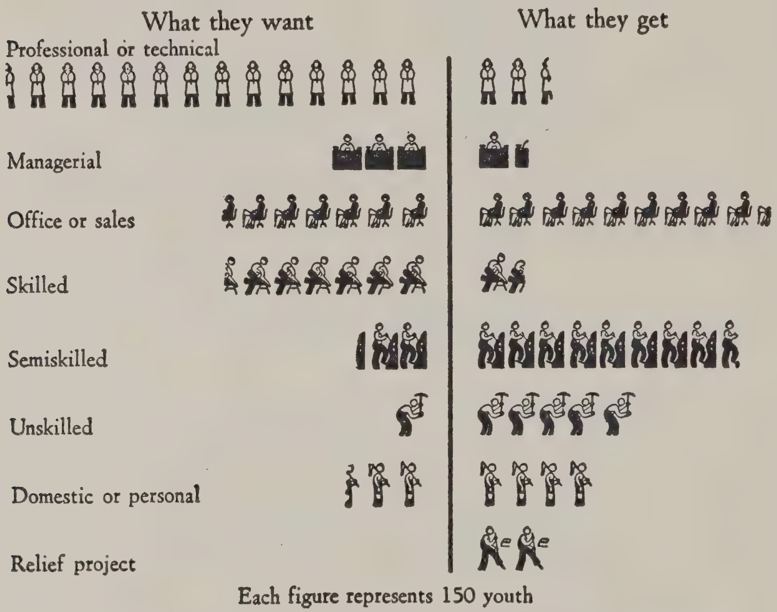
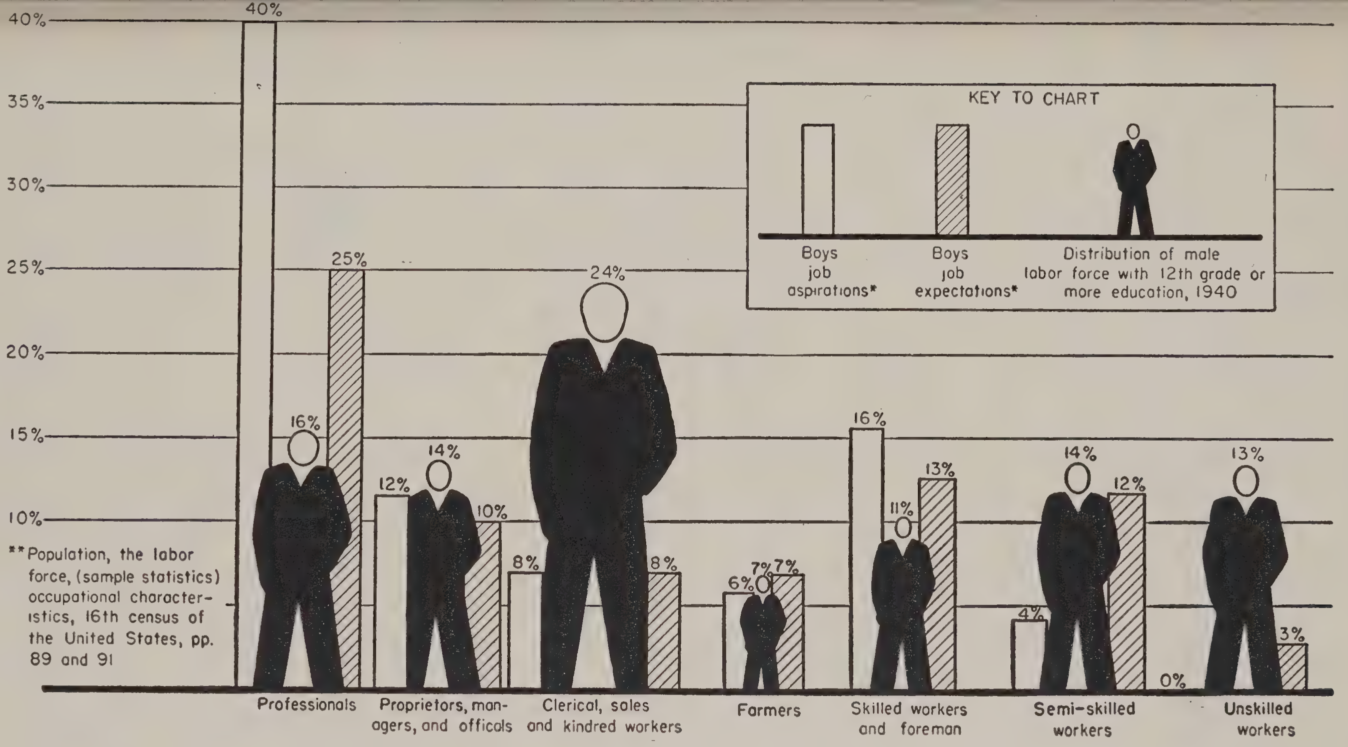


FIG. 51. JOBS YOUTH WANTED AND JOBS THEY GOT DURING THE 1930's. (*Howard M. Bell, Youth Tell Their Story, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.,* 1938, *p.* 132.)

It would seem that the years of the Second World War should have modified these values considerably. Then, overall jobs, with helmet and blowtorch, were popular for both men and women, and pay scales in many such skilled and semiskilled jobs were higher than in many professional fields, yet the high rating of professional jobs continues.

Speaking of college students some years ago, Tyson said that they have



**Population, the labor force, (sample statistics) occupational characteristics, 16th census of the United States, pp. 89 and 91

*14 percent did not indicate aspirations; 22 percent did not indicate expectations

FIG. 52. ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF MICHIGAN HIGH-SCHOOL SENIORS COMPARED TO WORK-WORLD OPPORTUNITIES.

This is the picture for the year 1948, a prosperous year. Many youth must fall short of attaining both their aspirations and their expectations. Does this not suggest the need for a more realistic appraisal of the work world by the school? (*Social Research Service, Michigan State College.*)

one ambition—to sit at a desk with a telephone on it.[11] Others expressed quite the same notion in their belief that what every youth wants is a job behind a desk with a swivel chair. The New York Regents' Inquiry found the desire for desk and white-collar work as follows: "The percentage of pupils who want to enter professions . . . exceeds many times the percentage of workers in this category. . . . There appears to be little likelihood that many will ever get into professional work."[12]

The desire for white-collar work is prominent not only among urban youth but among rural youth also. "Many sons of farmers have the same desire. One boy says that he does not care where he goes or what kind of work he does, as long as it is in an office."[13]

A Michigan State College study[14] of more than 6,000 boys and girls in the tenth and twelfth grades of high school showed that more than a third of the boys in that age group and more than two-thirds of the girls preferred "dress-up" jobs (see Fig. 53).

Certainly the place adolescents fill in the work world has been modified during and since the Second World War, as the Midcentury White House Conference chart shows. The number of adolescents in trade, where for two decades less than 200,000 were employed, by 1950 rose to more than 550,000. The number of those engaged in agriculture dropped sharply, and that of those in manufacturing dropped from almost 800,000 in 1920 to little over 100,000 in 1940. The number had increased to almost 250,000 by 1950.

This indicates clearly that the major outlet for adolescents today is in the general field of trade. (See Fig. 54.)

Most placements of youth under twenty-one by public employment agencies are in the specific fields of clerical work, sales, and service (see Fig. 55). Over half of those applying for jobs are placed there, and the ratio of placements there is much higher than for adults.

An even more detailed breakdown of the actual percentages of adolescents and youth employed in various specific occupations in 1950 as shown by the Census[15] is given in Table 26.

[11] Levering Tyson, "Problems Facing Youth," *Vital Speeches,* 5:765–768, Oct. 1, 1939.

[12] Ruth E. Eckert and Thomas O. Marshall, *When Youth Leave School,* p. 220, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1938.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 246.

[14] Social Research Service, *op. cit.*

[15] "Children and Youth: 1950," *Current Population Reports, Series P-*20, *No.* 32, Dec. 4, 1950.

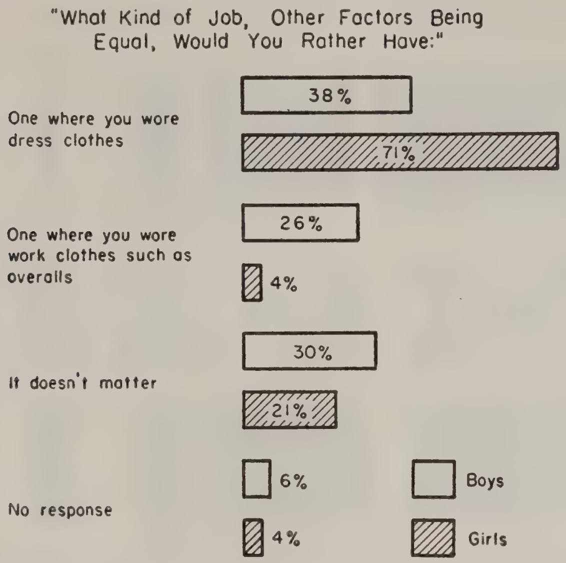
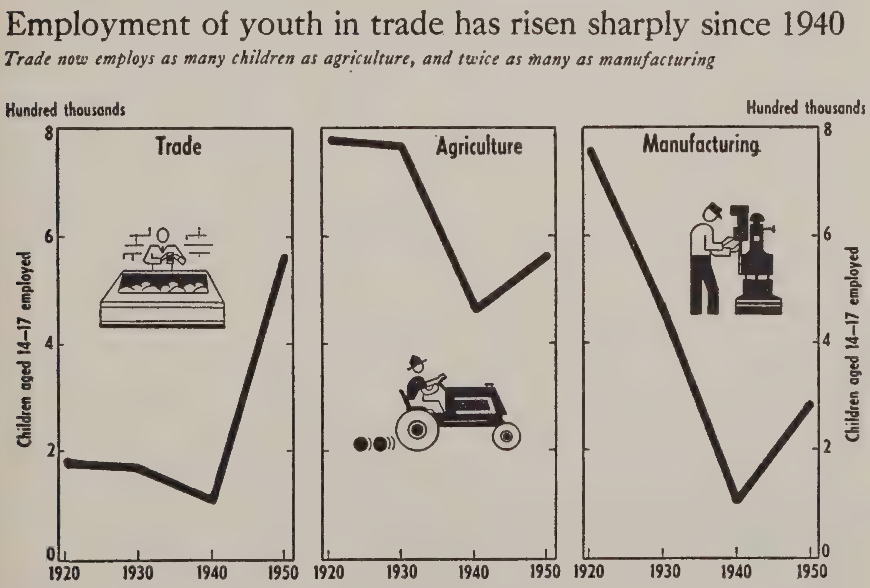


FIG. 53. MOST GIRLS AND MORE THAN ONE-THIRD OF BOYS PREFER JOBS WHERE THEY CAN BE DRESSED UP.

The study deals with more than 6,000 tenth- and twelfth-grade high-school young people in 1948. (*Social Research Service, Michigan State College.*)


Employment of youth in trade has risen sharply since 1940

Trade now employs as many children as agriculture, and twice as many as manufacturing

FIG. 54. THE FIELD OF TRADE IS NOW THE MAJOR FIELD OF WORK FOR ADOLESCENTS UNDER EIGHTEEN. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

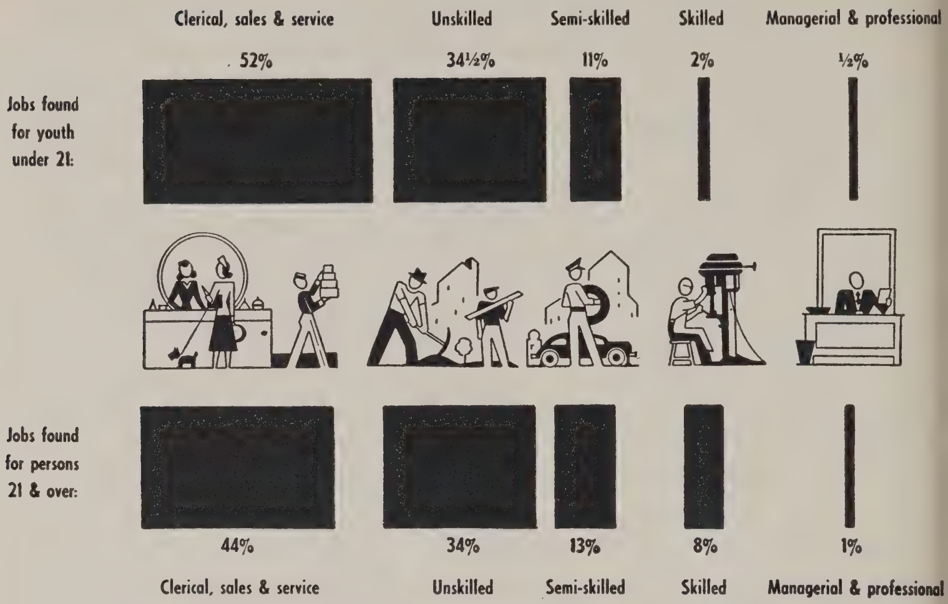


Fig. 55. A Relatively High Proportion of Youth Find Jobs in the Clerical, Sales, and Service Fields. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

Table 26. *Percentage of Adolescents and Youth Employed in Specific Occupations according to the* 1950 *Census*

Occupation	Males		Females	
	14–17 years	18–20 years	14–17 years	18–20 years
Professional, managerial, etc.	1.8	7.5	3.1	8.2
Clerical and kindred workers	4.7	8.3	16.1	45.3
Sales workers	13.8	7.7	20.3	8.8
Craftsmen, etc.	16.7	37.4	11.2	15.2
Private household workers	0.2	0.1	16.8	5.1
Other service workers	7.9	4.9	14.7	11.4
Farm laborers (paid)	12.0	10.2	3.3	1.5
Farm laborers, unpaid family workers	25.7	9.6	7.7	1.9
Other laborers	13.6	13.0	1.4	0.7
Not reported	3.6	1.3	5.4	1.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

THE GIRL'S DILEMMA

In the average family, the girl is taught economic dependence. In school she may be trained vocationally, and the work world may beckon her with an independent career. There is an obvious conflict between the standards of the average family regarding woman's ideal role and the role she actually plays in an urban industrial culture.

The major problem of all women is that of making adjustments (1) in the realm of love and sex and (2) in the realm of economics. In the first realm women have greater difficulty than men since the role of women in love adjustments is much less clearly defined than that of men. Sex codes, as they apply to women's behavior, have been in a more rapid process of modification during recent years than have those of men.

This is true also in the role of economic adjustment. It has always been assumed in our culture that man is to be the breadwinner. This is still what society expects of all men, but what society expects of women in this regard is not so clearly defined and, therefore, is in the realm of individual choice. Women choose first whether or not they will have a vocation and then what the vocation will be. A man decides only what his vocation will be. Even after having chosen a vocation, a woman's position is not settled. There is always the question of how long she will keep it, which affects her adjustments to it and her efficiency in it. Shall it be considered temporary until satisfactory marriage is possible, or shall it continue? If it is to continue, will it be only until the husband's earning power increases or until a child is born?

These are some of the perplexities that are peculiar to woman's adjustments in a complex society. The focal point of most of these decisions is the adolescent-youth period.

We must in our educational system come face to face with the fact that we are training young women for one thing and expect of them another. We train them to be ambitious career seekers, to compete on an equal basis with men in education, business, industry, and the professions. We expect them to learn to be self-sufficient and enterprising. In the school we almost entirely ignore the traditional role of women as homemakers, wives, and mothers. Actually most women today play both roles, some for short periods only, and others for long periods. Some play the two roles together; others alternate from the work role to homemaking at different periods in their lives.

No sooner does the average girl complete her education and obtain a taste of the stimulating effect of competition in the economic world than she marries. Then she may find that the occupational goals she has set for herself must be discarded and that she must learn to be wife, homemaker, and mother, roles for which she has been given practically no preparation in her educational training or in her work experience, and roles for which, more seriously still, she has been given no sense of appreciation. In fact, she is likely to enter them without feeling that they are particularly important roles. They may, in fact, seem to be roles that are forced upon her as a penalty for satisfying her desire for the love and affection of a mate.

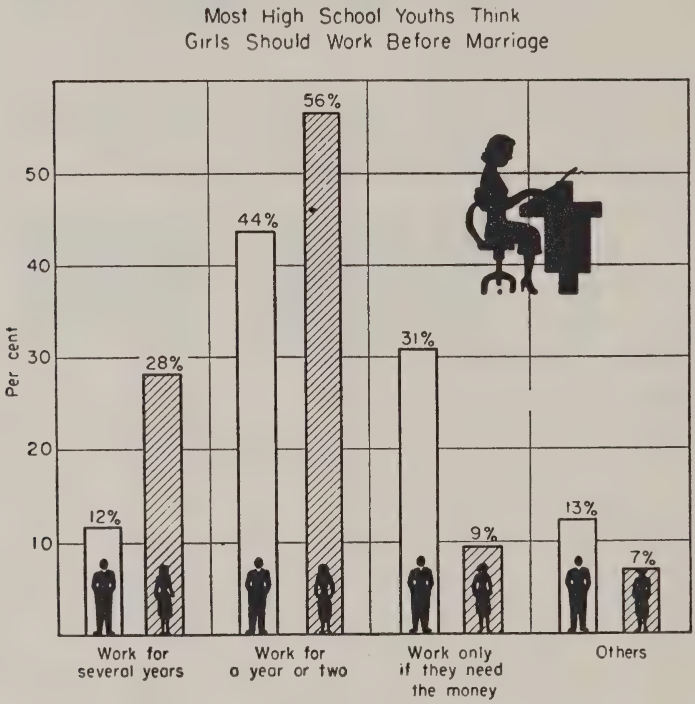


FIG. 56. WORK BEFORE MARRIAGE IS THE USUAL EXPECTATION OF GIRLS EVEN AT THE HIGH-SCHOOL AGE.

These data are for more than 6,000 Michigan teen-agers. Many more girls than boys think a girl should work before marriage. A part of women's conflict in the work world still stems from the fact that many men think women do not belong there. (*Social Research Service, Michigan State College.*)

It is little wonder that so many young women by the time they have finished college, or even high school and a period of business or professional activity, find the transition psychologically impossible and end up as frustrated wives, irritated mothers, and defeated career women. It seems clear that we must either change radically the values and objectives of education as they apply to woman's role of wife and mother, giving these values a new place, or else so modify the family institution that women can have an independent work life along with husband and children.

Clearly, the American school system must come to grips with this problem, as has been suggested at various points throughout this book. It affects motherhood by setting the stage for frustration. It affects every generation of children, adolescents, and youth to the extent that many mothers do not sufficiently appreciate their role as mothers. Being frustrated in it, they warp their children. It has also disastrously affected the birth rate of the educated group who obviously, even under the best of circumstances, consider children something of a nuisance and always a handicap to the attainment of other values which they consider most worth while and, in fact, which our society in its whole system of values rates more highly.

It must, of course, be recognized that a few women do succeed remarkably well in playing the role both of mother and of worker, but the great masses of them must choose between the two, and the choice of either in preference to the other in a culture that makes women desire both is rarely a happy choice. We must either train women to prefer one above the other or so order our social institutions as to make it possible for women who desire both to have them.

In wartime, feeble efforts were made to help women adjust to both roles, but the hastily ordered public institutions developed then for assisting mothers in their role as nursemaid penalized the children. This would not necessarily be true if social institutions to supplement family care of the child were adequately supported and carefully and scientifically developed.

JOB EXPERIMENTATION

Modern society, as we have seen, offers a wide choice of vocations. Fortunate is the youth who can experiment with more than one vocation before eventually settling down to the one which he finds most compatible. Much of this kind of experimentation does go on in our society. Some of it is no doubt due to the temporary nature of many jobs available to the young person, some due to a desire of youth for change and experience. It begins with school experience which often reveals to a youth his interest or lack of interest in a vocational field. Edwards's study of 674 senior college students[16] showed that 34 per cent of the men and 42 per cent of the women had changed their plan for lifework during college.

It continues on the job. Junior employment services, operating during the depression, found that by the end of the first year about one young person in five was in a job other than the one in which he was originally placed.[17]

A study of the experience of an organization hiring young people at the age of sixteen showed an annual turnover of approximately 400 per cent among employees sixteen to twenty years of age as compared with a turnover of only 40 per cent for employees above that age.[18]

Another study made among Iowa boys[19] shows that the average boy passed through three jobs in two years. The report of junior employment agencies is that there is normally a high turnover among young people placed in jobs.

A nationwide study of urban youth, which was based on detailed work histories of 30,000 youths in cities selected to represent all sections of the country during the summer of 1938, revealed clearly the trial and error of youth in a period of economic stress. The report reads:[20]

> These work histories show that some youth made the transition from school to industry with little difficulty. Others, however, after years of effort, are unemployed. Still others are engaged in temporary work, in dead-end jobs, or in work paying substandard wages. Many of the youth in these jobs are dissatisfied and are striving to obtain other work. They have not yet made a successful transition to productive activity.

In times of prosperity when jobs are plentiful, turnover of labor is high, and many seek to find more satisfactory jobs. No doubt a considerable part of this turnover is to be credited to the trial-and-error adjustments of youth to the work world.

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[16] Richard H. Edwards, J. M. Artman, and Galen M. Fisher, *Undergraduates,* Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York, 1928.

[17] Aubrey Williams, "The Government's Responsibility for Youth," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 194:119–128, November, 1937.

[18] These data were reported in Williams, *loc. cit.*

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] Cities selected were Binghamton, N.Y.; Birmingham; Denver; Duluth; St. Louis; San Francisco; and Seattle. Results are reported in *Urban Youth: Their Characteristics and Economic Problems,* Series I, No. 24, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D.C., 1938.

The American Youth Commission, after several years of study of the employment problems of youth, recommended the institutionalization of a work year for youth at about sixteen years of age, about the time they complete the tenth grade.[21] Some youth, the commission believed, have at this time had all the education that society should give them and should immediately enter the work world to stay. Others should, after a period of six months or so of toughening experience in the work world, be permitted to continue their schooling. The commission thought this kind of adjustment necessary because misfits among young people include many with good minds who have by long habit of schooling developed the mental characteristics of a sponge.

If employment should continue at the level of the 1940's, such a program would appear to be much less necessary, for, as we saw, in times of a high level of employment most high-school youth actually acquire work experience while in high school.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Summarize evidence bearing on the effect of education on vocational adjustment.
2. How does education affect occupation? Income?
3. Does the school give sufficient background for vocational choice? Compare large and small schools.
4. Try to explain in terms of social influences the widespread desire of youth for white-collar jobs.
5. Compare vocational aspirations with expectations.
6. What proportion of youth want "dress-up" jobs?
7. What fields of work are now most open to youth?
8. Summarize the conflict the career girl faces growing out of conflicting culture values concerning woman's proper role.
9. Do young people of this generation feel that women should work? Cite proof.
10. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of job experimentation for youth.
11. What did the American Youth Commission recommend?

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[21] American Youth Commission, *Youth and the Future,* pp. 23–27, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1942.

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CHAPTER 21

Problems of Work-world Adjustments of Farm, Village, and City Youth

BASIC ECONOMIC VALUES OF RURAL AND URBAN SOCIETY

Rural and urban life represent still, in spite of their approaching similarity, vast differences in value systems and life goals. These patterns of life each create their unique problems of adjustment for youth.

Three basic values predominate in the farm community: work, land ownership, and family. For many classes in urban society, life is pleasure-motivated rather than being work-motivated and production-minded. Work is but a means to an end. The labor union has tended in many instances not only to reduce hours and raise wages but to reduce production. Rather than having the family as its goal, marriage is considered a means to personal happiness rather than to the begetting of children. Land and property ownership as major goals are much less important than the lavish consumption of goods. To use Veblen's famous phrase, conspicuous consumption rather than the acquisition of real property seems to be the objective of urban life.

There are good reasons for these differences. The farm person takes pride in the output of his land, his manual accomplishments; his land and crops are there for all neighbors to see. They know they are his. This sort of pride is not possible in an urban culture. A person's neighbor cannot see the fruits of his labor. In his desire for group approval and to gain the attention of others, he resorts to "conspicuous consumption," that is, spending for show.

These values reflect rather directly in the experience and motivation of youth. The urban youth, instead of expecting to get ahead by work and faithful diligence in the performance of tasks as does the rural youth, is more likely to feel that pull, contacts, knowing the right people, dress, putting the best foot foremost, and other such traits are more likely to get one ahead than ability to accomplish a particular task.

A study made by the Works Progress Administration among urban youth during the thirties indicated that many attributed their jobs to pull. Aubrey Williams, Administrator of the National Youth Administration, reported[1] that youth who had experienced unemployment were convinced that a wide circle of acquaintances was the most important aspect of high-school experience. A great number of unemployed youth expressed regrets that they had not used their time to cultivate more friends, especially among peers whose fathers held influential positions.

"It pays to know people; I know lots of people," is a common phrase in urban parlance. This usually implies that one can get what he wants by knowing people. Pride in knowing the "right people" is also prominent. These people can even "fix" things if one should get into trouble by breaking traffic regulations or committing other offenses.

In a highly competitive labor market, such as prevailed in the thirties, urban youth felt that friends, relatives, personal application, influence, all the factors that we usually consider under the general slang phrase of "pull," were considered of primary importance in obtaining jobs (see Table 27). Youth who felt that they had no influential friends or relatives were resentful of those who had them and who, as a consequence, obtained jobs.

A study of youth in New York City during the depression[2] showed that well over half of those who were gainfully employed were placed in their more recent jobs by friends and relatives.

The New York Regents' Inquiry[3] also showed that youth tended to overrate contacts with adults and placed great value on friendship with adults to whom this friendship seemed to be very casual and unimportant.

There is no doubt that many underprivileged youth overexaggerate the influence of "pull" in the experience of others, although in obtaining employment there is no doubt that personal friendship and influence go a long way in a highly competitive urban industrial society.

On the other hand, the Michigan State College study[4] of both rural and

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[1] Aubrey W. Williams, *The Schools and the Unemployment Problem,* p. 12, National Youth Administration, an address before the National Education Association, July 4, 1939.

[2] Nettie P. McGill and Ellen N. Matthews, *The Youth of New York City,* p. 131, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1940.

[3] Ruth E. Eckert and Thomas O. Marshall, *When Youth Leave School,* p. 262, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1939.

[4] *Youth and the World of Work,* Social Research Service, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Mich., 1949.

TABLE 27. *How Youth Learned of Jobs in Seven Cities* *

	Both sexes	Male	Female
Total jobs on which source of information was known	78,196	43,671	34,525
How youth learned of jobs	Percentage distribution		
Personal application	23	24	22
Friend	28	28	28
Father	5	8	3
Relative (other than father)	9	9	9
Former employer	17	16	17
Offered job	2	2	2
School employment office	4	2	6
Employment agency	4	3	6
Union	1	2	†
Newspaper	2	2	4
Government jobs	1	1	†
Continued job held while in school	1	1	1
Self-employed	2	2	1
Other	1	†	1
Total	100	100	100

From *Urban Youth: Their Characteristics and Economic Problems*, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D.C., 1939.

* Binghamton, N.Y.; Birmingham; Denver, Duluth; St. Louis; San Francisco; and Seattle.

† Less than 0.5 per cent.

urban high-school youth made in 1948 showed that, even in that highly industrialized, highly urbanized, and highly unionized state, an overwhelming majority believed in learning many jobs and in hard work as means of getting ahead (see Fig. 57). Comparatively few felt that pull and influence were of primary importance. This would suggest that, in times when work opportunity is abundant, young people are less likely to feel that influence is the important thing in getting ahead than in times of widespread unemployment. On the other hand, it may be that this group gave influence less weight than they would after graduating and having a few years' experience in trying to compete in the work world.

The difference in urban and rural economic values has in the past been an important factor in the relationships between farm parents and their children. Duty and responsibility may have in many families borne heavily, too heavily, on the farm youth, until he saw no escape except through revolt.[5] Work and more work made up the daily ritual of life until it became almost a religion to the older generation and a plague to the new one.

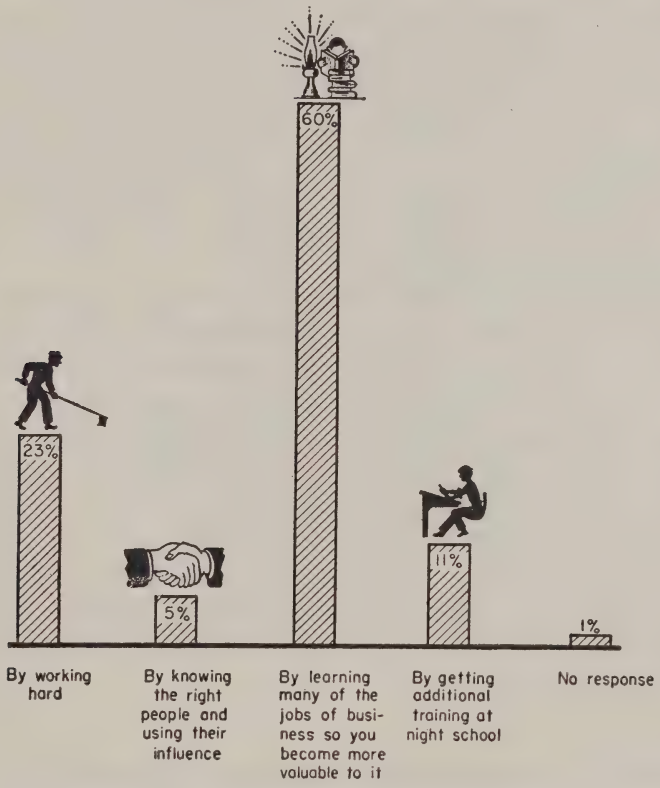

Fig. 57. How Michigan Youth Felt One Gets Ahead on the Job.

In general they believe in hard work as the way ahead. (*Social Research Service, Michigan State College.*)

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[5] This thesis is advanced in the White House Conference report, *The Adolescent in the Family,* pp. 158–162, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1934.

In more progressive rural areas the sharp clash between the modern urban pleasure philosophy and the semipuritanic work-duty philosophy of the farm community passed a generation ago. Farm youth in high school invariably develop some interest in the recreation-pleasure activities fostered for town and city school systems and the informal associations that accompany them. The first generation of youth going to high school incurs neighborhood condemnation for spending time and money on "foolishness." But as high-school attendance becomes the usual thing, the older generation come at first to condone and then to participate in athletics and other school events as spectators and to accept them as a legitimate part of life. In backward areas this transition in rural values is still in process, and conflict between the work philosophy of the older generation and the play motivations of adolescents and youth still exists.

At the basis of all this conflict between the generations is the carry-over among the old of serious interest in family, progeny, land, security, and independence—values and ideals that have little appeal to more sophisticated farm youth who have acquired urban values.

Though the conflict between the old and the new generation is never wanting in any environment, it seems to have been greatly reduced in urban culture where people of all ages emulate youth and imitate their behavior. In the city today almost everyone wants to appear young; consequently, youth receives little condemnation. But in the farm community people still grow old, and once a person begins to age psychologically, inelastic habits and attitudes crystallize and more plastic youth appears rebellious, frivolous, reckless, worldly, and godless.

MIGRATION AS A FACTOR IN WORK-WORLD ADJUSTMENTS

Youth is the age of migration. Migration is often a first step in making adjustments to the work world, particularly for farm youth and those in the small country towns. In America the most important current of migration is from farms to towns and cities. This movement, as well as the movement back to farms, is represented on the chart below (Fig. 58). During the various years over a million to more than 3.5 millions left farms for towns and cities. Only during the years immediately after the war did the movement to farms exceed that to cities, and this largely because of veterans returning after their discharge from the armed forces.

In the depression decade—the 1930's—the farm migration slowed down. Millions of youth were piled up on farms without opportunities for vocational adjustment. For example, Taeuber[6] estimated that there were, in 1940, 2 million more persons aged fifteen to twenty-nine on farms of the nation than would have been there had migration been at the same rate during the depression decade of the thirties as during the twenties. The greatest damming up of youth was in those areas which have least economic opportunity, like the Appalachian and Ozark highlands, because high birth rates coincide with poor physical resources.

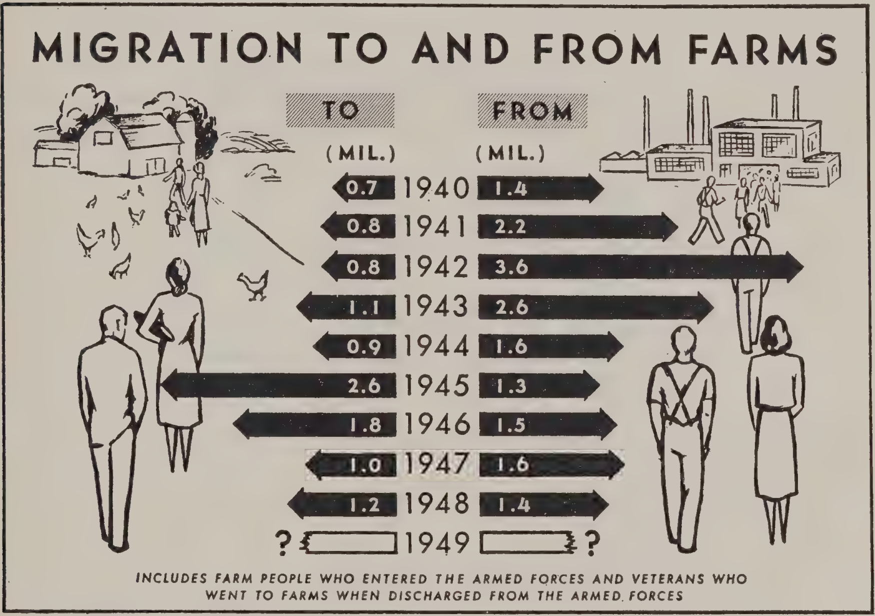

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FIG. 58. IN ALL YEARS EXCEPT THOSE OF DECLINING INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT THE PREPONDERANT MOVEMENT IS CITYWARD.

Studies by rural sociologists of the farm-to-city migration show that it is predominantly of young people; a third are under twenty-five years of age. In most areas more girls than boys migrate to towns and cities from farms, and they go at a younger age.[7] The peak period of migration for girls is about eighteen to twenty years of age; the peak period for young men is twenty-one to twenty-three years of age.[8]

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[6] Conrad Taeuber, *Statement of Farm Population Trends,* U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, presented before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, Washington, D.C., May 6, 1940.

[7] For a more comprehensive summary of research dealing with migration to cities from farms and its age and sex selectivity, see Paul H. Landis, *Rural Life in Process,* rev. ed., Chaps. 12 and 14, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1940; also, see his *Population Problems,* Chaps. 20–24, American Book Company, New York, 1943.

Village as well as farm youth migrate in great numbers. A study of 14,369 pupils in Illinois high schools,[9] located in places of less than 5,000 population, showed that approximately two-thirds left the home community.

A study[10] of the loss of young men from places of various sizes to cities of 100,000 shows that the loss of all places runs from almost 14.7 per cent to almost one-fourth (see Fig. 59). In general, the smaller the place, the greater the loss. The loss from places of under 250 population is not so great as from places slightly larger. These data include farm youths, since the classification is based on town of home address. Loss occurs at the time the youth accepts his first job.

The greatest number of discontented American youths seem to be found in villages and small towns. Bell[11] based his judgment on replies of 13,528 young people, ages sixteen to twenty-four, to the question, "If opportunity for choice presented itself, where would you prefer to live?" He found that about three-fourths of the young men and women living in villages (places of under 2,500 population) expressed dissatisfaction with living there, about 65 per cent of those in towns (places of 2,500 to 25,000 population), about 40 per cent of the young men and about 50 per cent of the young women on farms. Few young men and still fewer young women in cities and suburban areas (places of 25,000 population and over) reported dissatisfaction with the places where they lived. His results are shown in the pictographic chart (Fig. 60). He concludes:

> Regardless of whether youth are living on farms, in villages, towns, or cities, the greatest preference is shown for cities and the suburbs of metropolitan areas. . . . It would seem that the urbanization of our population is as yet an uncompleted trend. The "back to the farm" movement may have a powerful appeal to harassed and depression-sick breadwinners, but it seems to have made very little impression on the younger generation.

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[8] C. Horace Hamilton, "The Annual Rate of Departure of Rural Youths from Their Parental Homes," *Rural Sociology,* 1:164–179, June, 1936.

[9] H. H. Punke, "Migration of High-school Graduates as Affected by Sex, Marriage, and Economic Conditions," *School and Society,* 48:833–836, Dec. 24, 1938.

[10] Paul H. Landis, "The Territorial and Occupational Mobility of Washington Youth," *Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 449, Pullman, Wash., July, 1944.

[11] Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story,* p. 39, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1938.

Three-fourths of village youth would move out of their home towns if they could.

The difficulties of life in the village for youth are explained in part by the age structure of the typical village population group. In most of the older sections of the country, the village is dominated by old people, widows, and retired farmers. This older group is usually resistant to change and progress. Having passed the working age, they are inclined to save what they have and live economically, not having a great deal of interest in schools, playgrounds, parks, youth programs, youth centers, and other such developments which are primarily of interest only to families with young people. This

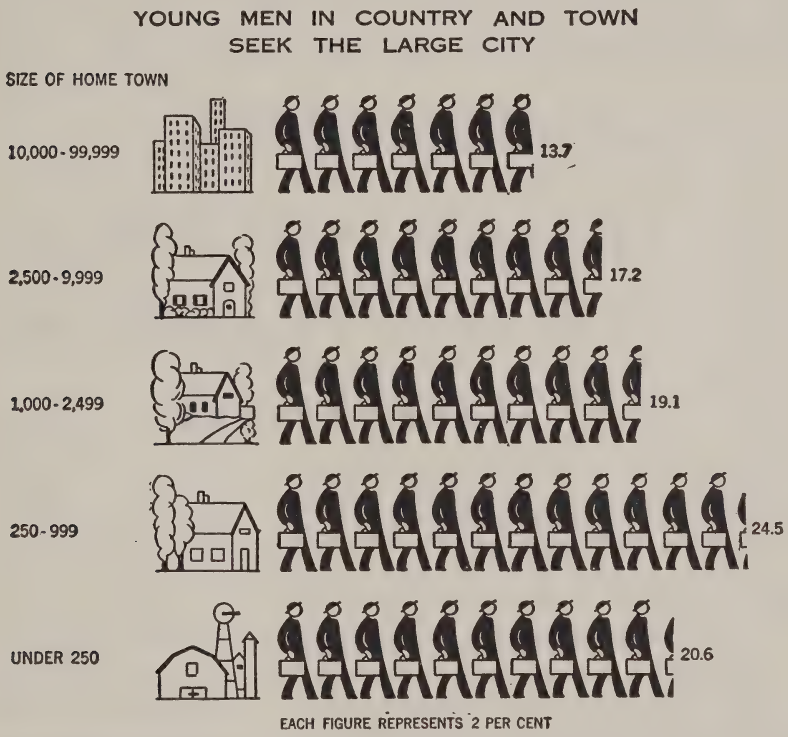

FIG. 59. THE METROPOLIS IS A MAGNET DRAWING YOUTH FROM COMMUNITIES OF ALL SIZES.

Loss of young men from places of various sizes to cities of over 100,000 population at the time of taking their first job, based on a study of 950 civilian young men in the state of Washington. (*Landis, Washington Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 449, *July,* 1944.)

economic conservatism is often matched by moral and intellectual conservatism which also proves a heavy drag on the interests and ambitions of the youth group in the community. There is probably something to the usual expression of young people who refer to their towns as dead towns.

The dearth of recreational and social leadership is intensified by the fact that the more aggressive leaders in the older youth group are likely to leave the village community for college or for jobs in large cities and metropolitan centers. The more docile group that remains behind is likely, therefore, to lead a rather dull dead-level existence. The pool hall becomes the recreational agency for the boys.

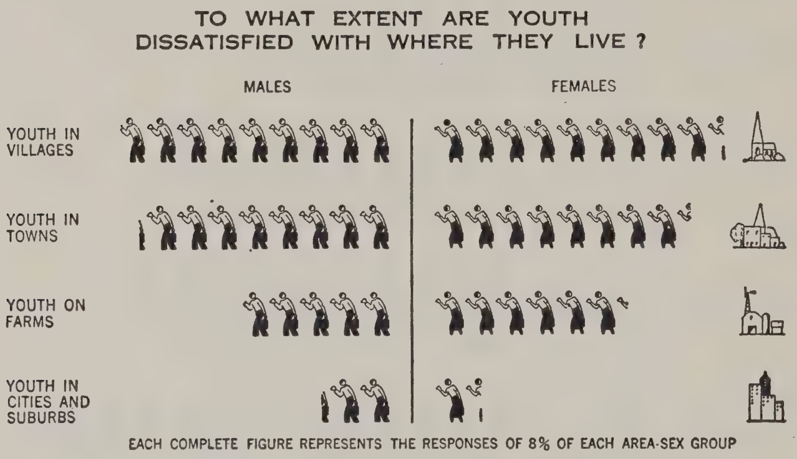

Fig. 60. Comparative Proportions of Village, Town, Farm, and City Youth Who Are Dissatisfied with the Places Where They Live.

The desire to escape villages and towns is greater than the desire to leave farms. Few youth in cities and urban suburbs want to leave them. Why the dissatisfaction of so many village youth with their villages? (*Bell, Youth Tell Their Story, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.,* 1938, *p.* 39.)

Urban youth are much less affected by migration than village and farm youth. Some do migrate, but usually to the same kind of social habitat in which they grow up. When the metropolitan-reared youth migrates, he migrates to another metropolitan center.[12] The awkwardness of the city dude in rural life is made the butt of many rural jokes, but the fact is that the metropolitan-reared youth seldom thinks of establishing himself in the rural community. He does not attempt to make this difficult adjustment to a new social environment.

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[12] Evidence on this point is presented in Paul H. Landis, "The Territorial and Occupational Mobility of Washington Youth," *op. cit.*

URBAN OCCUPATIONAL ADJUSTMENTS OF RURAL YOUTH

The fact that farm and village youth migrate in great numbers is established. What of it?

Do youth who would profit most by the opportunities of urban life engage in migration, or is it more often the youth who will be misfits anywhere? This involves the whole question of selectivity of the migration and its numerous implications.

How successful is the rural youth in entering urban occupations advantageously? Do they gravitate to the poorest jobs, the ones filled by the unskilled immigrants of the former generation? Or do they have an equal chance with urban youth in entering the entire range of urban occupations? Or do they even excel urban youth in finding an undue proportion of more favored occupations?

Do rural youth enter into their urban social adjustments with a reasonable degree of ease and facility? Or are problems of adjustment fraught with a great deal of confusion, emotional turmoil, and uncertainty? If this should prove to be the case, what changes should be made in the conditioning system of the rural school, the rural neighborhood, and the rural family to avoid this shock?

The social waste, the futile trials and errors, the frustrations, the disappointments of farm youth in selecting, experimenting with, and mastering nonagricultural vocations no doubt would make an interesting story, one which has never been adequately told.

The question of selectivity of the migration from farms to towns and cities has intrigued rural sociologists for more than a generation. E. A. Ross, in some of his early writings,[13] likened New England rural communities to fished-out ponds with only bullheads and suckers left. Since his day numerous studies have been made and with somewhat differing results.

Several tests have been applied to try to determine whether or not the rural population has been depleted in population quality. Common tests are the proportion of feeble-minded in urban and rural populations; the proportion of mentally diseased; the comparative intelligence as measured by tests, comparative school achievements; the competitive success of rural young people when they arrive in the cities to match wits with the urban-born, and the contribution to leadership of the rural- and urban-born, as measured by men of distinction.

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[13] *Principles of Sociology,* pp. 24–27, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1920.

Literature in this field is so extensive that an adequate treatment must be sought in rural sociological literature.[14] Briefly, comparisons of mentally diseased show much higher rates of commitment in urban than in rural areas. Since most forms of mental disease are not specifically hereditary, this is probably not an adequate measure of quality of the biological stock. In any case, commitment is always higher among those above the age of childhood and in areas where families are less likely to keep problem cases within the home. The urban population has more people in the middle and upper ages, and because of congested living spaces, is less likely to keep problem cases in custody of the family. It would logically be expected, therefore, that there would be a higher rate of commitment in urban than in rural areas even though the rate of disease was equal.

Actually many forms of mental disease are produced by stress in the environment and would be expected to develop more frequently in the city.

Rates for commitment of the feeble-minded are also higher in cities than in rural areas, in fact, almost twice as high. Again, willingness to institutionalize the feeble-minded is no doubt much greater in the city.

During the First World War, more than twice as many draftees from rural as from urban areas were rejected because of mental defectiveness—1.5 per cent from urban areas compared to 3.9 per cent from rural areas—which leads one to suspect that rural areas retain more of the feeble-minded in the population at large than do urban areas. It is possible that they are also less often hindered from reproducing in rural areas, which would tend to work, to some extent, toward lower quality of the rural population.

Numerous comparisons of rural and urban populations by intelligence-test results have been made. The Army alpha test, used in the First World War, placed farmers seventh from the bottom in intelligence in a list of 74 occupational classes drafted. Part of this difference might be explained by the fact that successful farmers were not drafted, but it is doubtful that this would fully explain the low rank of the farm group.

Baldwin[15] and his coworkers in Iowa during the 1920's found that one-room-school children were at a great disadvantage on intelligence tests because they did not have an effective use of language. Sociologists are inclined to explain many of the differences in achievement of urban and rural people on intelligence tests in these terms.

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[14] For more extensive treatment by the author than that appearing here, see his *Rural Life in Process*, Chap. 8 and 15.

[15] Burt T. Baldwin, *et al.*, *Farm Children*, pp. 248–300, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1930.

One of the most precise studies of intelligence-test comparisons was that made on 2,423 former high-school students by occupation, as determined by the I.Q. while in school.[16] This test showed that farmers are relatively numerous in the group with an I.Q. below 95 and underrepresented in the group with an I.Q. above 105. They ranked ninth from the top in a list of ten occupational groups. Even professional people working in rural areas ranked lower in intelligence than those who worked in comparable occupations in cities.

Studies[17] for the state of Washington, where consolidated schools have, for a good many years, given approximate parity of educational opportunity to rural and urban youth, show that rural youth entering the State College of Washington make a poorer showing on the American College Entrance Examination than do urban youth. This is true, even though rural youth much more often come from the top 10 per cent of their graduating classes. It was found, however, that rural youth, particularly farm youth, less often drop out of school, improve more throughout their college career, and a higher proportion graduate in the end than do urban youth. They apparently, therefore, have more persistence and other qualities which tend to compensate for less flashy performance on specific mental tests.

We are led to conclude, therefore, that exact measures of urban and rural intelligence have, as yet, to prove that there are striking differences in biological quality of rural and urban groups.

Studies of listings in *Who's Who* and *American Men of Science* show a much higher proportion of urban than of rural people listed.[18] The significance of these findings is questioned by sociologists on the ground that such rating volumes tend to list professional men rather than men who are outstanding in such fields as agriculture. Studies of *Rus,* a volume listing agricultural leaders, shows that the farm community produces most of the agricultural leaders.[19] Rural youth also achieve educational leadership more often than the normal proportion of cases.[20]

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[16] Carol D. Clark and Noel P. Gist, "Intelligence as a Factor in Occupational Choice," *American Sociological Review,* pp. 683–694, October, 1938. Also see Noel P. Gist, C. T. Pihlbad, and Cecil L. Gregory, *Selective Factors in Migration and Occupation,* Vol. XVII, University of Missouri Studies, Columbia, Mo., 1943.

[17] Raymond W. Hatch and Paul H. Landis, "Social Heritage as a Factor in College Achievement," *Research Studies of the State College of Washington,* 10:215–272, December, 1942.

[18] See such studies as J. M. Cattell, *The Distribution of American Men of Science,* 24:658–665, and 32:633–648. Also, his *American Men of Science,* 2d ed., pp. 555–568, and 3d ed., p. 785; G. R. Davies, "A Statistical Study of the Influence of Environment," *Quarterly Journal,* University of North Dakota, 4:212–236; S. Nearing, "Younger Generation of American Genius," *Scientific Monthly,* 2:51–52; S. S. Visher, "A Study of Place of Birth," *American Journal of Sociology,* 30:552.

In summary, although the city may draw a higher than normal proportion of those with flashy intelligence, there is still no reason to be alarmed about the quality of the rural population in most parts of the nation from the eugenics standpoint.

AN APPRAISAL OF GAINS YOUTH MAKE BY MIGRATION

The problem of success of youth after migration has been given too little attention. Anderson reports that farmers' sons in New York enter many other occupations, and he finds no evidence that they are less successful in entering positions of equal rank with nonfarmers' sons.[21]

The economic and social adjustments of a group of Appalachian migrants, some of whom had been in Cincinnati ten years or more and some for less time, compared with those of a group of Cincinnati-born youth, show clearly that the "hillbilly" migrant faces a great number of disadvantages in making a normal transfer to urban industry.[22] The migrant group entered the city with less educational training than the city-born group possessed. They found a less desirable place in industry, earned less money, and less readily accepted the protection available to urban industrial workers; namely, employee benefits, insurance, trade-union and club membership. The newcomers had to bear the brunt of discharge from seasonal trades. It was also found that they less frequently developed hobbies as diversion outside working hours than did the urban group. Their housing was inferior to that of the urban-reared group. Overcrowding was more common. They crowded into multiple dwellings, also, more often than did Cincinnati-born families. In addition to these adjustments, they were not fully accepted by Cincinnati residents, which complicated problems of both social and economic adjustment.

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[19] P. A. Sorokin, *et al.,* "Farmer Leaders in the United States," *Social Forces,* 7:33–45, September, 1928; J. F. Thaden, "Characteristics of Persons Listed in *Rus," Rural Sociology,* 2:429–443, December, 1937.

[20] Wilson Gee, "Rural-Urban Origins of Leaders in Education," *Rural Sociology,* 2:402–408, December, 1937.

[21] W. A. Anderson, "The Transmission of Farming as an Occupation," *Cornell Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 768, Ithaca, N.Y., October, 1941.

[22] Grace Leybourne, "Urban Adjustment of Migrants from the Southern Appalachian Plateaus," *Social Forces,* 26:238–246, December, 1937. For another study of this character, see Morris G. Caldwell, "The Adjustments of Mountain Families in the Urban Environment," *Social Forces,* 16:389–395, March, 1938.

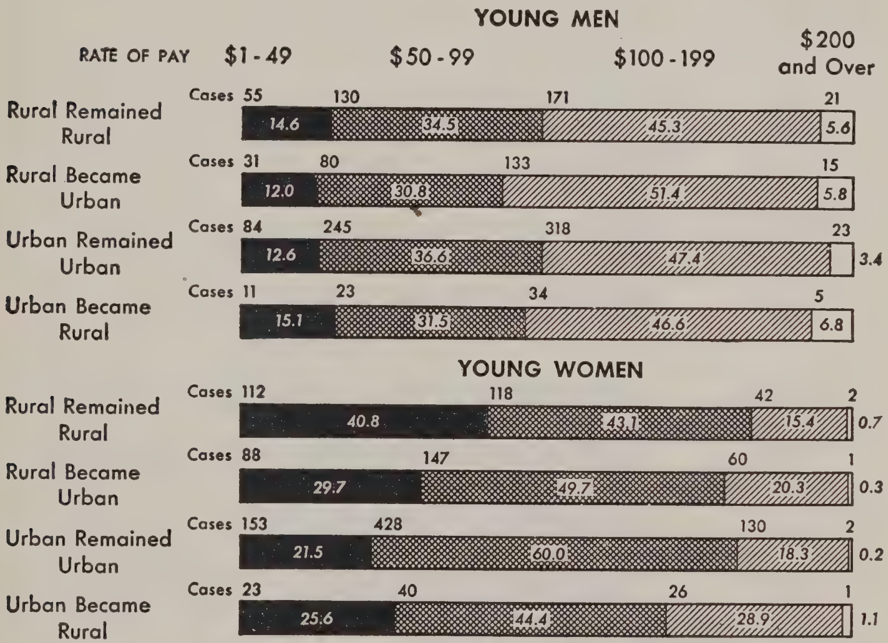

FIG. 61. RATES OF PAY ON FIRST JOB FOR STABLE AND MOBILE YOUTH OF BOTH RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

Mobile youth gain an initial advantage. (*Landis, Rural Life in Process, p.* 214.)

Studies of the economic adjustments of rural and urban youth in Washington, as they move from the rural area to the urban or from the urban area to the rural, show that they make the adjustment to the new work world very successfully. In examining these results, it should be kept in mind that consolidated schools, equally accessible to rural and urban youth from the standpoint of free tuition, have long been practically universal in the state. Adjustments of farm and small-town youth to urban vocations may be, therefore, far different than in states still depending primarily on one-room country schools for the education of their children.

These studies[23] show that rural youth migrating to urban areas are better educated than rural youth who remain behind but less well educated than urban youth with whom they take up residence; that urban youth moving to rural areas are less well educated than urban youth who remain in cities but are better educated than the rural youth with whom they compete occupationally in rural areas.

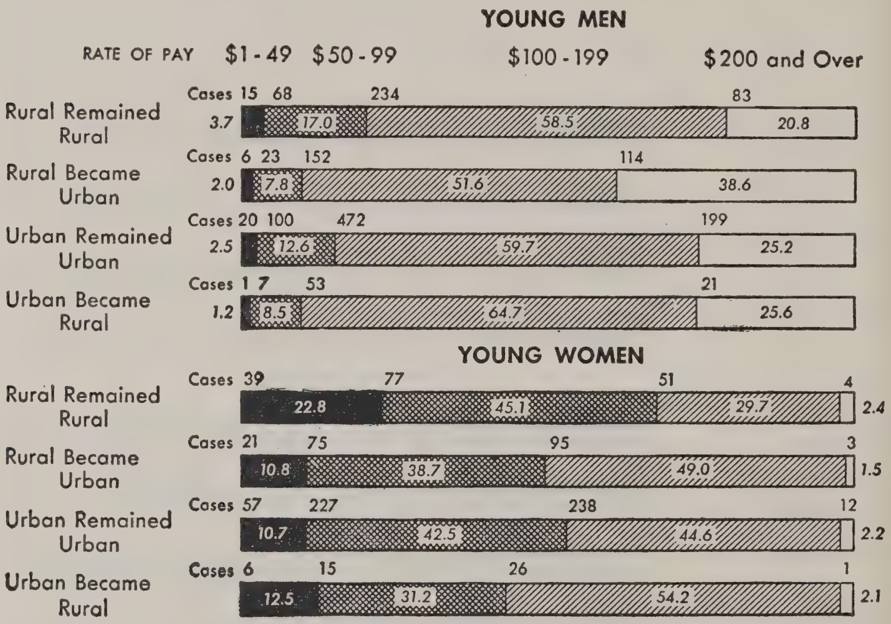

Fig. 62. Rates of Pay after an Average of Four Years' Work Experience of Stable and Mobile Youth of Both Rural and Urban Areas.

The advantage of the mobile group is even greater than on their first job. (*Landis, Rural Life in Process, p.* 215.)

In spite of initial educational disadvantages, rural youth migrating to cities excel urban youth with whom they compete in income. On the other hand, urban youth who move to rural areas excel resident rural youth in income. Urban girls moving to rural areas are especially successful according to economic criteria. From the standpoint of status-giving occupations, rural youth moving to cities seem to be at a disadvantage, especially rural girls. They do, however, achieve superior occupational and economic status to rural people remaining behind. Urban youth migrating to rural areas rate high in both financial and occupational success.

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[23] Paul H. Landis, "Educational Selectivity of Rural-Urban Migration and Its Bearing on Wage and Occupational Adjustments," *Rural Sociology,* 11:218–232, September, 1946 (Scientific Paper No. 673, Washington Agricultural Experiment Station).

In summary, (1) basic to understanding work-world adjustments of farm, village, and city youth is an understanding of the predominating economic value systems that determine the attitudes of rural and urban young people toward work. (2) For a fourth to as many as a half of farm young people adjustment to the work world requires migration to town or city. (3) A fifth to a fourth of the young people in towns and cities under 100,000 population, also, move to metropolitan communities of 100,000 population or more to find their first jobs. (4) Metropolitan young people usually stay within the city but, with them, knowing the right people is rated highly as a factor in determining successful entry to the work world. (5) There is evidence that rural youth migrating to cities make successful economic adjustments in spite of their unequal educational preparation and general lack of knowledge of urban occupations and urban philosophies of life.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Compare the basic values of rural and urban America.
2. How do they affect the rural and urban youth's approach to work life?
3. Show how the clash of rural and urban values affects the transition of farm youth to economic maturity.
4. Present evidence to show that city people are generally more tolerant of youth and youthful ways.
5. Why do urban youth rate pull more highly than rural youth?
6. With what youth group or groups is migration most used as a method of economic adjustment? Why?
7. What does a slowing down of urbanward migration mean as far as many farm youth are concerned?
8. What are the ages of greatest migration?
9. Compare youth of city, village, town, and country with regard to degree of satisfaction with where they live. What area do they like best?
10. Give possible reasons for the dissatisfaction of village and town youths with their places of residence.
11. Summarize evidence for and against the theory of selective migration urbanward.
12. Discuss the problem of rural youth in adjusting to urban life and occupations.
13. Do they adjust successfully?

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PART FIVE

Adolescents and Youth in the School

In slow-moving simple societies that characterize the backward areas of the world today and that have been characteristic of the man-made habitat throughout much of human history, the problem of education is largely one of passing on tradition. In a technological society the problem of education becomes much more comprehensive. The transmission of mores and folkways is but a small part, in fact, perhaps even a neglected part in our time. The passing on of technicways and stateways—those rationally developed modes of action, procedures for accomplishment, and ways for manipulating human affairs—becomes a major function of education.

In this rationally motivated world change becomes a symbol of progress, and the new the symbol of the better. Unlike traditions, which are tried and tested and proved by experience, the new is always experimental and forward-looking; therefore, all life becomes oriented toward change and improvement. Discarding the old model and adopting the new becomes an accepted pattern of a technological society, and the new model becomes a symbol of a new age ahead. Each new technique becomes an outreach of man's hand to increase his leisure, his skill, and his power over natural environment.

The school has come to reckon with the everyday problems of technological change. In a world of universal mobility the mere driving of a car becomes of such supreme importance to safety and well-being that the high school introduces courses in driving. Such goals for learning are a shock to the old classical tradition in education, but are necessary adaptive mechanisms in a world of rapid inventive change.

In the carrying of these new burdens the school has taken an increasing share, but its load, and thereby its privilege to serve adolescents and youth, must become even heavier.

CHAPTER 22

The School and Adolescent-youth Peer-group Adjustments

SIGNIFICANCE TO EDUCATION OF THE WIDENED GAP BETWEEN CHILDHOOD AND ADULTHOOD

Much social significance is connected with the prolongation of infancy in modern society. In primitive agricultural societies, as Winslow observes, there are no youth problems and youth is not set apart as a separate group.[1] But today numerous groups consisting entirely of adolescents and youth have developed, and in them young people exercise control, formulating codes, practices, and patterns for life fairly independent of adults. In most societies adults have been the conservers of tradition and have been able to pass these traditions on to their offspring. The independent adolescent-youth groups of our society make possible escape from adult patterns and more rapid change in mores, traditions, and customs. Adolescents and youth consequently have come to play a part in social change such as ordinarily has been denied them. Many implications to family, school, church, and state are involved, which are more applicable to the urban than to the rural community, because as yet the grouping of adolescence and youth takes place in towns and cities. An increasing number of farm youth as well are members of at least the high-school group.

In the experience of all youth in our progressive states, the high school, which assembles the most important adolescent-youth group in our society, is without doubt the most important single social institution. Although there are many ways in which it no doubt hinders growing up, it does help develop independence from the family, especially in farm communities where a semipatriarchal authority pattern often persists.

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[1] W. Thatcher Winslow, "International Aspects of Modern Youth Problems," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 194:165–173, November, 1937.

The fateful importance of the high school to the adjustment of adolescents and youth to life, as well as to group welfare, in an urbanized society is suggested by the following statement of the New York State Regents' Inquiry:[2]

> Whatever the secondary school fails to do in developing general competence for living will, for the most part, remain undone.
>
> As the social scene is surveyed, it is strikingly evident that competent and broadly trained leaders are lacking in almost every field of endeavor. There is an abundance of specialized knowledge and technical skill . . . but the intellectual balance and social perspective essential to leadership in a domestic society remain conspicuous by their absence.

INSTITUTIONAL NORMS OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

The elementary school is devoted to the acquisition of basic skills required for learning: language, digits, and the general system of human communication. Information is given as final and exact. In the high school begins the attempt to answer questions concerning problems of life. The acquisition of knowledge continues, but in addition, the student struggles with problems that have no exact answer, in course work that applies to problems of his own personal future vocation, and with social problems of the world that he will enter as an adult. At the high-school level, also, specialization begins in that the vocabularies diverge into various technical fields. At the university level, learning is more a matter of facing problems and of trying to consider various possible solutions. A critical attitude is developed. As knowledge increases, the ability to evaluate knowledge is encouraged. For the more simple language of an elementary scientific vocabulary of the secondary-school systems is substituted the use of extremely abstract symbols of communication, mathematical formulas, blueprints, chemical symbols, and language symbols that are known only to the specialist in a given line of scientific endeavor.[3]

In the background of all this education are the objectives of (1) passing on a selected part of our complex cultural heritage to the next generation and (2) developing the individual's ability to master situations and function in the more complex phases of modern life. At the higher level of education, the graduate level, the ideal is to develop the creative scholar who not only masters a specialized field of knowledge but adds to the field of knowledge by discovery, invention, and research.

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[2] Ruth E. Eckert and Thomas O. Marshall, *When Youth Leave School,* p. 5, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1938.

[3] For a graphic description of this increasing complexity of the school system from one level to the other, see Fig. 17, p. 120, in F. S. Chapin, *Contemporary American Institutions,* Harper & Brothers, New York, 1935.

In our democratic society, the public school has had another underlying motive which has been a powerful ferment in our nation's history. The school has become a social organ for elevating the individual to a higher social and occupational status along with its development of the mind and passing on of knowledge.

In all education above the grades—secondary school, college, and university—there is the widespread belief that education is a device for achieving vertical social mobility. Rightly or wrongly, education is considered the way to the top. Parents who want their children to accomplish the goals that they themselves have failed to accomplish are ardent believers in education. Just as ardent supporters, however, are the parents who themselves are educated, for they are inclined to attribute their own success to the educational system. One must, therefore, consider that one of the major institutional norms of the school system, implied if not often overtly stated, is that the school system is a device for improving the lot of the individual and assuring his vertical mobility. Education and success are identified in the thinking of people in all walks of life. This fact explains more than any other the popularity of secondary education and college among the masses of citizens.

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENTS IN PEER-GROUP RELATIONS

The school, by virtue of the fact that it brings large numbers of adolescents and youths together into separate age-group situations, is the most important social institution in our society having to do with peer-group adjustments. The importance of peer-group adjustments, as of social adjustments at any age, is exaggerated by life in an urban society. Isolated peoples need worry little about such adjustments. Agricultural peoples adjust to nature. Their anxieties center primarily about weather, crops, livestock, etc., but those of urban peoples center about relationships with others. Social adjustment has, therefore, become the first criterion of happiness and a criterion of success and school progress.

Social adjustment among adolescents and youths is measured by degree of popularity in the peer group. As Horney has so well expressed it:[4]

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[4] Dr. Karen Horney, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time,* p. 116, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1937.

> . . . in America . . . being popular has become one of the competitive aims, and has thereby gained a significance which it does not have in other countries.

Concerning the social pressures of American culture as they affect youthful adjustment on the college campus, Angell has the following to say:[5]

> American youths are extraordinarily sociable, perhaps because the confusion of modern life renders the individual unstable and tends to throw him back on the mass for support. . . . The feeling that one must belong to something in order to be respected by one's fellows is deep rooted in American life.

Even though the teacher in high school and college is likely to think of his own happiness primarily in terms of social relations, he is likely to think primarily in terms of the subject-centered curricular world for the student. The student himself is more likely to measure success in terms of activities and social adjustments with peers.

Although the following statement seems somewhat extreme, it does stress the supreme importance of proper peer relations to satisfactory school progress:

> There is little we can do for him educationally until we have helped him achieve satisfactory status with his peers. Until he sees some solution for that problem, he is in no state to profit from the intellectual experiences the school offers.[6]

There are undoubtedly many capable youths who find introverted escapes from unsatisfactory peer relations and who achieve success in spite of them, but it requires supreme effort to overcome the emotional turmoil of peer-group rejection even when it is done successfully.

After reading more than a thousand autobiographies written by college freshmen, the author is firmly convinced that many of the scholastically most successful high-school pupils use books as an escape from inferiority feelings growing out of unsatisfactory peer-group adjustments. As a result, they develop intellectual interests that lead them to continue their education in college. In any case, the better college student very often describes his high-school experience as one of generally unsatisfactory relationships with peers and of intense feelings of inferiority.

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[5] Robert C. Angell, *The Campus,* p. 87, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1928.

[6] Lois H. Meek, *The Personal-social Development of Boys and Girls with Implications for Secondary Education,* p. 66, Progressive Education Association, New York, 1940.

This shift of the interests from peer-group popularity to studiousness is not entirely void of social incentives. Even in the peer group brilliance in schoolwork gains some recognition. The primary recognition, however, comes from teachers who are likely to bolster the ego of the good student and provide for him a small but nonetheless influential group of admirers. Since as the adolescent or youth grows older the adult value of scholastic success and intellectual competence comes to play a larger part, these high-school young people, by virtue of the precocious development of mental interests, are actually further ahead in the long run in many cases than those who, even though they may have been bright, overrated the factor of peer-group popularity to the neglect of the acquisition of knowledge.

In considering the influence of the peer group, one should consider not only the immediate school class or age group in which the adolescent participates but also the older age group which often is held in awe and supreme respect by the younger adolescent. Upperclassmen become models for lowerclassmen. Few of us can forget the awe with which we, as young freshmen in high school, beheld the leaders of the senior class, or even in our college days the untouchable perfections and prestige of the seniors who seemed to possess all the graces, powers, and freedoms of adulthood.

The reading of autobiographies mentioned has led the author to believe that most adolescents go through high school under the sense that their adjustment problems in relation to peers and adults are peculiar to themselves. It seems probable that, if adolescents and youth could in some way be made to understand that the kinds of experiences they are having—of inferiority, of insecurity in peer-group social relations, etc.—are common to all, they would take them less seriously and weight them in proper proportions. At least an adult, in reading the typical and near-universal experiences of adolescents in our culture, gets the impression that they are significant primarily because the young person fails to understand that they are common experiences and, therefore, assigns them a weight altogether out of proportion to their real significance. Emotional maturity consists in part in a realization that such experiences are the common lot of mankind. When the youth comes to recognize this fact, he is already approaching maturity and the adjustment problem tends to occupy less room in his consciousness. This argument, of course, is based on the idea that the problem ceases to be critical when viewed objectively.

Undoubtedly many young persons could be saved a great deal of emotional torture by the wise counseling of teachers who could show them that their emotional experience was shared by many of the most daring of their peers.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN PEER-GROUP RELATIONS

Many problems of social adjustment, at the high-school age particularly, concern relations with the peer group, although young people are also troubled with their relationships with older people. The proportion of 5,500 Washington high-school seniors checking various problems in their social relations is shown in Table 28. Fear of hurting people's feelings was most often checked. How to make friends was checked by a considerable proportion as being a problem; getting into activities, attitudes of schoolmates, understanding other "kids," getting along with other "kids," quarreling with friends, being snubbed, being made the subject of gossip, and other such facts in interpersonal relations were checked by a small percentage.

FAMILY BACKGROUND AS A FACTOR IN PEER-GROUP ADJUSTMENTS

Peer-group adjustments in the school are often complicated by family patterns which clash with those of the peer group, as is suggested by the following statements:

> Conflicts are precipitated, especially when new ideas run counter to old beliefs; when, for example, a young person is urged by the new group to be "a good sport" in smoking, drinking, or petting. Consequently, an individual may feel forced by social pressure to experiment in an unfamiliar field.
>
> When experiences of friendships with members of the opposite sex are relatively new to young people, they may feel obliged to follow slavishly the dictates of their contemporaries about "what is done." [7]

The new generation, both rural and urban, seeks greater freedom; the old hesitates to give it, fearing the demoralization that the new freedom might engender.

> In one respect at least they (rural youth) are agreed with urban youth: whatever it is that troubles them and whatever it is they are after in life, they no longer expect to find their way by listening to their elders. In fact, so certain are they that they live in another world, they do not intend even to reveal themselves to the older generations.

[7] Esther Lloyd-Jones and Ruth Fedder, *Coming of Age,* p. 94, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1941.

TABLE 28. *Percentage of 5,500 High-school Seniors Who Checked Certain Problems of Social Adjustment**

Social-adjustment problem	Boys	Girls
Hurting people's feelings	22.3	25.9
Too few social activities	16.5	13.8
Talking to older people	10.9	15.6
How to make friends	13.0	13.4
Being left out of things	12.4	11.5
Not thoughtful enough	10.6	12.3
People hurting my feelings	4.6	13.0
Not being popular	7.9	10.3
Getting into activities	8.9	9.1
Attitude of my schoolmates	8.0	8.7
Understanding other kids	7.6	8.6
Not enough time for recreation	7.3	7.7
Getting along with other kids	8.7	6.6
Stop quarreling with friends	5.7	7.8
Explaining things to adults	6.2	7.2
Getting acquainted in school	5.9	6.6
Afraid of being snubbed	4.2	7.6
Schoolmates gossip about me	3.5	7.8
Want to go with certain group	5.8	5.3
No chance to do what others do	5.3	5.6
Too many activities	4.9	5.8
Can't bring friends to my home	4.2	6.3
Can't go out as much as others	4.5	5.5
Getting along with adults	3.0	3.3
This place isn't very friendly	1.4	3.4
Other people boss me around	1.9	2.7
Being picked on by others	2.3	0.8
Ashamed of my clothes	1.3	1.5
My friends quarreling with me	1.2	1.4
Unkind treatment toward race	0.4	0.3

* L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems*, The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., January, 1949.

They are beginning to sense in a vague way that science implies new values and meanings for life. This frightens their elders who thought they were living in a scientific age, because they used gasoline engines and allowed their sons to attend agricultural colleges.[8]

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[8] "Rural Youth," *New Republic*, 49:57–58, Dec. 8, 1926.

Leaders in the peer group have influence because of the strong desire of the youth group to conform. Sensitivity to ridicule or to other types of group censure is difficult to overcome. Only as the individual acquires a degree of maturity is he able to stand on his own feet and confidently go against a gang if he feels that he is right.

The most universal and socially most difficult adjustments to peer group grow, not out of the clash of peer-group and parental moral codes and ethical standards, but out of economic and cultural differences, implied in our general concept of differences in standard of living between members of the peer group themselves. In the transition from high school that is forced upon so many adolescents thirteen to sixteen years of age in our time of universal education, poor housing and a low standard of living are a blow to self-respect and hinder the making of social adjustments. We heard a great deal about the ill-housed, the ill-clothed, and the ill-fed during the thirties. Even as late as 1939 the White House Conference report[9] stated that 6 to 8 million of the nation's 36 million children and adolescents under sixteen years of age were in families that had been recipients of public assistance some time during that year. The poverty of these homes and their low standard of living are often in direct contrast to the relatively lavish school facilities provided by the modern consolidated school in country, town, village, or city. The contrast between standards of living, as the adolescent makes friends in the school system with those from other economic levels and different degrees of social privilege, becomes a severe source of embarrassment.

A study[10] of problems of high-school youth in a large city school system showed that 19 per cent were seriously troubled by the financial condition of the home. This study was made in 1942 when the nation was near a level of full employment and when wage rates were at a fairly high level. For a picture of incomes of families with children for the prosperous year 1948 see Fig. 63.

Young people may invent excuses to keep members of their peer groups from coming to their homes because they are ashamed of the level of living or education of their parents, the appearance of their homes, and their method of life in general. The extensive interaction of youth of various social and economic backgrounds in the school system has made it more difficult for the child in the average small community or even city to keep his home condition, neighborhood surroundings, and general background hidden from his friends. In earlier society these associations between young people of widely different backgrounds were not so common. Everyone in the stable neighborhood and community knew the social and economic level of his peers; but now these factors are unknown until friendships develop, and the underprivileged youth may find himself in the position of (1) trying to conceal his background; (2) being unable to conceal it and trying to rationalize it to his friends; (3) being so embarrassed at the prospect of identifying his home situation, the relative status of his family, or other situations which for him are vivid skeletons in the closet to his peers, that he isolates himself from the group, fearing to develop intimacies that would lead to his more complete identification with his background; (4) trying to accept it and hold his friends in spite of the background.

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[9] *Proceedings of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy,* Washington, D.C., Jan. 18–20, 1940, U.S. Department of Labor, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1940.

[10] Charlotte Pope, "Personal Problems of High School Pupils," *School and Society,* 57:443–448, Apr. 17, 1943.

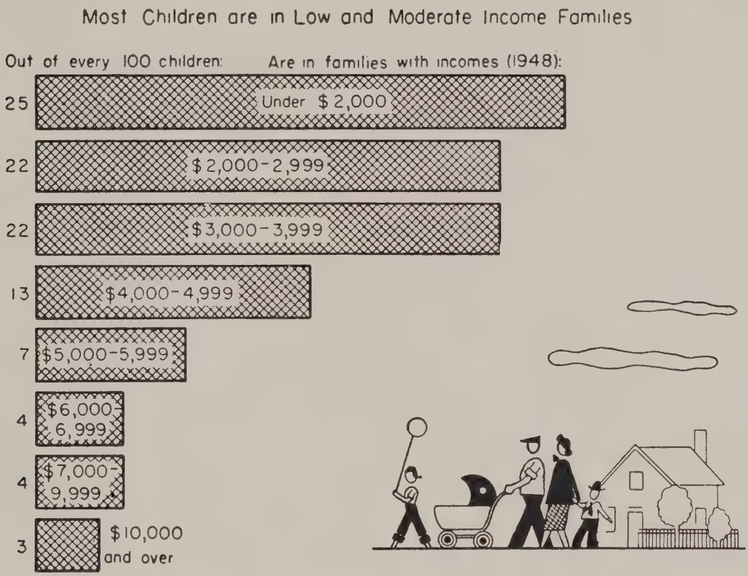

FIG. 63. IN 1948, A YEAR OF HIGH INCOME, ALMOST HALF OF THE NATION'S CHILDREN LIVED IN FAMILIES WITH LESS THAN $3,000 INCOME. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

The Elias[11] study of Washington seniors asked the following question:

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[11] L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems,* The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., January, 1949.

"In comparison to our families' needs, my parents' income is . . ." Five alternatives were presented for checking. Results are given in Table 29.

TABLE 29. *Responses of* 5,500 *High-school Seniors Who Checked a Statement on Adequacy of Family Income*

Response	Boys, per cent	Girls, per cent
A very satisfactory income	16.4	15.9
A good income	30.7	29.5
Resonably sufficient	41.8	43.3
Not quite sufficient	9.3	9.5
Definitely insufficient	1.1	0.9

More than 10 per cent were in the two bottom classifications. This study was made in the spring of 1947—a top year of high average income.

In the economic sphere come many of the most severe adjustments of the high-school period and, also, some of the severe problems of the college period. However, in the college period the youth is more likely to be free of the home situation, especially if he goes away from home to college.

Even college young people nonetheless often feel a sense of inferiority growing out of their family backgrounds. One college girl expresses her uneasiness concerning her family background in the following statement:

> College has broadened my associations and made me feel that my own home life is inferior in many ways and has made me want to improve it. However, I realize that many boastful college students, who make a show of belonging to higher strata of society, really come from homes where Saturday night is the family bath night.

Difficulties of adjustment are by no means confined to the kind of patterns that go with economic privation or other marks of low economic status. In some cases the desire of youths to keep their home situations out of sight is provoked by conflict between parents, by attitudes of the parents toward the children, or by other factors of a psychological and social rather than an economic nature. At times the conflict centers about trying to conceal the religious pattern of the family. This is especially true where parents belong to a revivalistic sectarian group. In all these situations, the parent, who many times is doing his best and is even making sacrifices for his children, can see little reason why they should be ashamed of the home situation.

Actually, in many cases the youth should not be ashamed of his situation, but he, like adults of the community, tends to rate people and situations by appearances, by evidences of wealth, and by other current values, and cannot control his sensitiveness and embarrassment in exposing the situations to his friends and comrades. It is possible that youth do take too seriously some of these pecuniary standards of evaluation and may apply them with greater seriousness to the home situations than do adults who are often able to overlook economic or other handicaps because of the other values that the family obviously cherishes. The youth himself, as he grows older and approaches life with greater perspective and experience, may entirely reevaluate the situation, but the fact that he is unable to do so during the adolescent-youth period creates a serious crisis in his social adjustments.

The housing background and general standard of living of the farm youth are often factors in his social adjustment. The American farm has shared many of the benefits of mechanization, but a high proportion of farm homes still lack the basic conveniences that are usually taken for granted in town and city residences: electricity, running water, and bathrooms.

Figure 64 on page 384 shows the condition of farm homes and nonfarm homes in 1947. It will be seen that only one in five farm homes had indoor plumbing. Conditions, of course, vary greatly from state to state, and among Negro families the worst conditions are to be found. The Midcentury White House Conference report showed that 25 per cent of nonfarm homes occupied by Negro families needed major repairs.[12]

It is likely that, because of such factors as have been pointed out above, social adjustments in educational institutions are more difficult for those of meager social background and economic status than in factory or office.[13]

Although all these difficulties that the underprivileged youth faces in adjusting to the peer group in the school situation must be admitted, they are not inherent in the philosophy of the school itself. The school is democratic in its tradition and strives to create a situation of equality. Teachers, aware of the problem, can do a great deal to give the socially disadvantaged pupil confidence.

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[12] See *Chartbook,* description of Chart 32. Published by Health Publications Institute, Inc., Raleigh, N.C., 1951.

[13] Such a view is expressed by Douglas A. Thom in *Normal Youth and Its Everyday Problems,* p. 305, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, 1932.

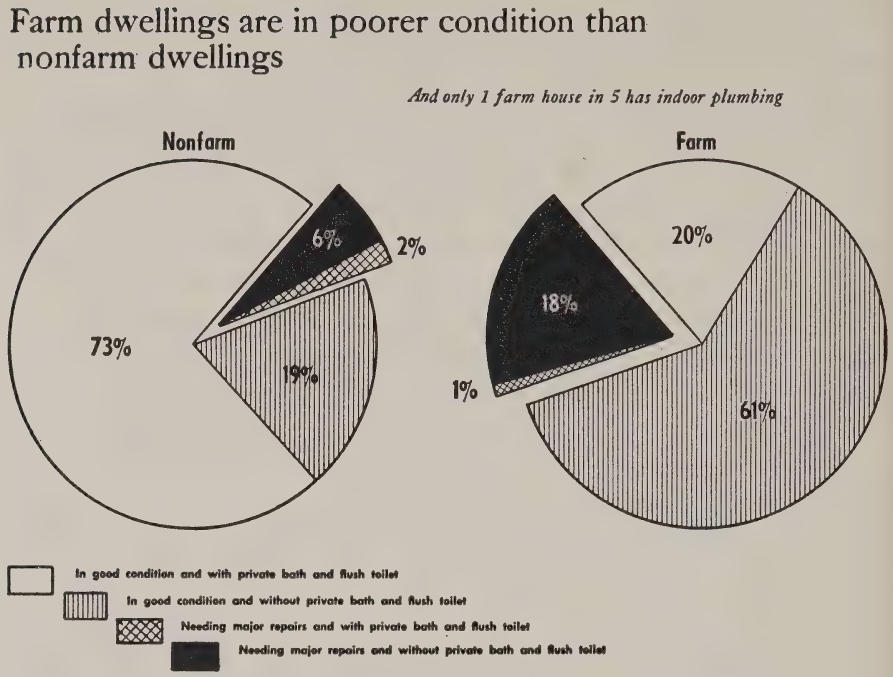

FIG. 64. THE HOME MAY BE A HANDICAP TO THE ADJUSTMENT OF ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH WITH THEIR PEERS IF IT IS FAR BELOW THE STANDARDS OF THE COMMUNITY. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

PERSONAL-SOCIAL OBJECTIVES TO BE ATTAINED

For the personal-social development of each individual adolescent and youth the ideal of the socially useful, reasonably happy, and group-accepted individual must be kept in mind. This does not mean that the school should attempt to stamp the same pattern on all individuals. The greatest social usefulness and personal satisfaction are obtained by helping the individual find the place in the social structure that will be satisfying to him with his own unique temperament, abilities, and interests.

The natural steps that personality development should take with reference to social objectives have been well summarized by Meek in Table 30, which is developed to indicate the goals toward which a social-activities program should be oriented. A careful study of the transitions that need to be made is rewarding.

The goals of tolerance, understanding, regard for the rights of others, a sense of one's responsibility for his own personal well-being and for those dependent upon him should always be kept before adolescents and youths in peer-group situations supervised by the school.

TABLE 30. *A Guide Chart for the Social-activities Program of Boys and Girls Developing from the Onset of Puberty into and through Adolescence* *

Growth from	Toward
1. Variety and instability of interests	Fewer and deeper interests
2. Talkative, noisy, daring with a great amount of any kind of activity	More dignified controlled masculine and feminine adult behavior
3. Seeking peer-status with a high respect for peer standards	The reflecting of adult cultural patterns
4. A desire for identification with the herd, the crowd of boys and girls	Identification with small select group
5. Family status, a relatively unimportant factor in influencing relations among peers	Family socioeconomic status an increasingly important factor in affecting with whom boys or girls associate
6. Informal social activities such as parties	Social activities becoming more formal, such as dances
7. Dating rare	Dates and "steadies" the usual thing
8. Emphasis on building relations with boys and girls	Increasing concern with preparation for own family life
9. Friendships more temporary	Friendships more lasting
10. Many friends	Fewer and deeper friendships
11. Willingness to accept activities providing opportunities for social relations	Individual satisfying activities in line with talent development, proposed vocation, academic interest, or hobby
12. Little insight into own behavior or behavior of others	Increasing insight into human relations
13. The provision of reasonable rules important and stabilizing	Making own rules with a definite purpose in view
14. Ambivalence in accepting adult authority	Growing independence from adult and dependence on self for decisions and behavior; seeking relations with adults on an equality basis

* Lois Hayden Meek, *The Personal-social Development of Boys and Girls with Implications for Secondary Education*, p. 121, Progressive Education Association, New York, 1940.

PERSONNEL WORK IN THE SCHOOL

One of the newer developments in secondary and college education which holds great promise for seeking better relationships with peers and a better grasp of their futures is the program of personnel work, usually summed up in the high school under the term "guidance" and in the college under the concept of personnel work. The essential aims of these programs are (1) to help young people understand and make the most of their present educational opportunities, (2) to aid them in their adjustment in the education system and to give them while in the school an appreciation of the future application of their present educational and social activities and, (3) to prepare them for and assist them in making the transition from school to society.

These programs, although yet in their comparative infancy, are based on the case method of approach to problems of the individual pupil. By the case method we mean essentially the kind of approach that is as much interested in changing situations to fit the individual as in arbitrarily forcing the individual into an established institutional mold. The emphasis is in the direction of orienting the school about the pupil rather than about the curriculum. The guidance-personnel program is interested in the whole child rather than in any one of his particular abilities. The program requires, for effective prosecution, detailed case information on each pupil, his interests, needs, temperament, and abilities as rated by the various instruments of educational measurement and as evaluated by teachers observing his school and extracurricular performance.

To the extent that these programs are perfected and effectively operated, they offer great hope for reducing the number of malcontents and maladjusted within the school and later within society. They cut down trial and error, a great deal of blind stumbling around on the part of young people to find themselves in their immediate educational and social situations, and ultimately, when the youth leaves school, help cut down the trial and error of his eventual adjustments to the work world and to out-of-school social groups.

The ultimate goal of a proper personnel program for adolescents and youth is self-development to the point of moral, marital, and economic maturity in the broad sense in which these terms have been used throughout this book.

In a complex society guidance becomes increasingly necessary. The world over, most societies have offered the individual few paths in life. Children have lived with their childhood playmates for a lifetime. Occupations have been passed on from father to son through the process of social transmission. The pattern of morality has been relatively fixed through generations and has been absorbed automatically by the child. Adolescent-youth problems in the modern sense did not exist. Little formal guidance is necessary in societies where the pattern of life is clearly outlined.

In a complex urban industrial society many patterns of life exist. Numerous paths face the individual from cradle to grave. The wisest, most far-seeing adult can scarcely grasp the implications of his own conduct or scarcely decide wisely in all issues that face him throughout life. Little wonder that this kind of world has become bewildering for those in the immature years who have thrust upon them responsibility for numerous decisions. Guidance, counsel, the best wisdom of adults must be made available to adolescents and youths if they are to make the transition to adulthood with a minimum of trial and error, emotional fatigue, and anxiety.

In the field of vocational selection alone, their problem has become one demanding greater wisdom than the average talented youngster possesses.

That the needs for guidance are manifold is only recently becoming clear as the school begins to appreciate more fully the social, moral, and economic as well as the intellectual needs of adolescents and youth in a complex social order.

> It is the prime duty of guidance . . . to help the individual discover his own talents, in comparison to the opportunities of the world, and help him prepare himself so that he can find or develop a place in which he can live a well-balanced life, and contribute his part to the welfare of his fellow men.[14]

Most young people of high-school age today are ready to accept adult advice and counsel. The Elias study asked the following question, with five alternative choices for checking by the 5,500 seniors: "I would like to discuss my personal problems with some adult." Results are given in Table 31.

TABLE 31. *Responses of* 5,500 *High-school Seniors Who Checked the Statement: "I would like to discuss my personal problems with some adult"*

Response	Boys, per cent	Girls, per cent
Always if possible	14.4	21.5
Usually like some adult advice	46.0	51.1
Would like it as often as not	21.5	15.9
Seldom care for adult advice	11.2	7.5
No desire for adult advice	4.7	2.6

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[14] Leslie L. Chisholm, *Guiding Youth in the Modern Secondary School,* American Book Company, New York, 1945.

Asked further whether they could find a satisfactory adult adviser, almost half felt that they could whenever they needed one (see Fig. 65). Less than 8 per cent felt they could seldom or never find a satisfactory adviser. Can the school meet the needs of this group? A more detailed study of these youth would be desirable.

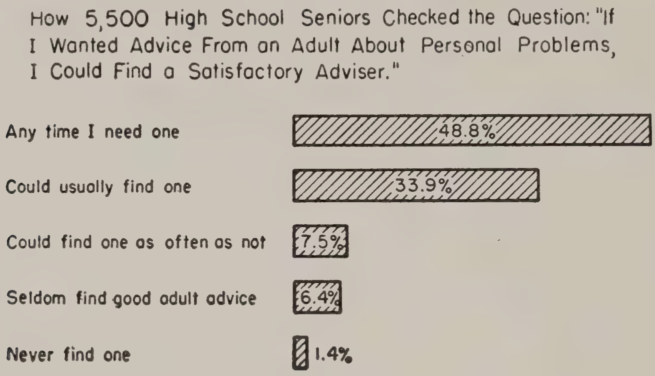

Fig. 65. Most Teen-agers Are within Reach of an Adult Adviser.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Point out the significance of the widened gap between childhood and adulthood to education.
2. Discuss the implication of self-sufficient youth groups of our society.
3. About what institution do most of these groups center?
4. Show how educational norms change as the child advances through the school system. What are the objectives of education for the individual?
5. Show how our cultural goal, vertical social mobility, affects the support of secondary and college education for youth.
6. Why do we say the school has more to do with adolescent peer-group adjustments than any other institution? Explain.
7. Why has social adjustment become the primary criterion of personal well-being in our society?
8. How are young people likely to measure their social adjustment? Is this attitude peculiar only to adolescents and youths?
9. Is there no way out for the individual who fails in making effective social adjustments to peers?
10. Do you think adolescents' mental and emotional problems would be less severe if they understood their universality?

11. Show how the home situation affects peer-group adjustments of young people in school.
12. Discuss the social adjustments that adolescents make to a low standard of living.
13. Discuss this problem as it applies to farm youth.
14. Discuss social objectives of the school.
15. Trace the process of social growth in the adolescent as outlined by Meek.
16. Discuss the importance of guidance in the schools.
17. Do teen-agers wish adult advice and counsel? Present evidence.
18. Are adult counselors usually available to teen-agers?

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CHAPTER 23

Adapting the School Program to Current Needs of Adolescents and Youth

THE BROADENING RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SCHOOL

The modern school system is asked to compensate for the failures of others of our more basic social institutions. It is for this reason that its efficient administration and functioning are so deterministic in the lives and experiences of adolescents and youths. It must compensate in a large proportion of cases for unhappy home situations where conflict and bickering have robbed the child of the essential security which should be the birthright of all.

The teacher of the adolescent may actually have to become a confidant, a role which should have been assumed by the parent but which could not be assumed because of the chronic conflict between the adolescent and the parent or because of marital conflict in the home or other such factors that produce an atmosphere where confidence and trust and even normal conversation are impossible. The adolescent finds the teacher the only adult in whom he can confide. Then there are a large number of children who come from broken homes. (Refer again to the chart on page 208.) In them the teacher must take special interest since all adolescents need an adult confidant to help them in the many decisions to be made.

In too many cases the school must provide a core of moral teaching which should have already been deeply implanted in the home but which parents, confused in their own moral lives, fail to cultivate in their children. It must give sex instruction because some parents are ignorant, careless, fearful, or perhaps too emotionally involved or too closely in touch with the problems of family administration and household routine ever to penetrate into these more intimate phases of the experiences of their adolescent children. It must teach habits of regularity and a sense of responsibility because the home has failed in many cases to do so. It must develop habits of industry in a society that has removed the work world so far from the domestic scene that the child grows up without experience in work, duty, and responsibility. It must even indirectly, if not directly, build a regard for religion, a respect for Deity, the sense of man's eternal destiny, for an increasing number who have never seen their parents engage in any form of religious exercise, pay due respect to Deity, or open the Bible. It must in many cases introduce adolescents and youth who have not had any connection with church or Sunday schol for the first time to a realization that religious institutions and religious experience are part of the great heritage of mankind. It must bring to many for the first time through one device or another a sense of security that men find in religion, faith in God, and the ultimate triumph of righteousness, and this without direct religious teaching. It must for many provide the only intimate play group that they have ever had by bringing children, adolescents, and youth together in a situation where play is part of the normal pattern. Unfortunately, an increasing number of children grow up in only-child situations without the experience of giving and taking in peer-group relationships. The school system has to assume a major part of the responsibility for the elementary processes of socialization once taken care of in the great family where there were many brothers and sisters and lesser relatives in the immediate play group.

The school must also inculcate respect for the aged in a society where many children grow up to adolescence without having any experience with relatives, grandparents, or other aged people. Even respect for parents often is lacking until such ideals are developed in the school system. Many of these social realities, so essential to the development of the mature socialized individual, are best impressed in the early period of adolescence when for the first time major attention in the curriculum shifts from the rote memory to training in the less exact phases of human experience.

The school has also had to supervise more and more of the leisure time of young people as chores have disappeared in family experience.

ACTIVITIES AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCE

It has come to be recognized that training of the mind is only one function of the high school now that it embraces such a large portion of the population, many of whom are not interested in college entrance. Many of the interests of young people that cannot be met within the classroom can be met outside it in extracurricular activities. The school is recognizing its responsibility for broad training, for giving practical experience in leisure-time activities, and for extending the range of social participation and experience.

In recent years especially there has been considerable effort to get every youth to participate in a number of social activities, the assumption being that the more activities in which the young person engages, the richer his personal experience will be, and the more well-rounded his personality will become. There is considerable merit in this approach; too much introversion and too much isolation are not wholesome to the development of the person.

On the other hand, it is possible to influence the adolescent to participate so widely in numerous activities that he develops no core of interests, no integrated philosophy. He many even lose his power to discriminate and choose. Casual participation in many groups without deep loyalty to any one group does not necessarily broaden personality; it may make it shallow, superficial, and ineffective. The attempt to develop extroversion in the personalities of all individuals is absurd in any society with specialized functions. A cultivated introversion directed toward high purposes and well-selected goals may be creative and socially useful.

The good fellow, hale and well met, a stranger in no situation, is a personality type that has been too much overvalued in our highly competitive, economically motivated, business-oriented culture. The school has too often been inclined to try to stamp all youth with this pattern. It is time that the teacher recognizes that a small group of like-minded individuals may share experiences that are more vital than any they will gain by promiscuous participation in an attempt to be friendly with everyone.

Actually, in a complex society no individual can participate in a large portion of existing activities and pursue those interests and values which for him will mean a creative, purposeful, and useful life. It is important that young people learn rather early to participate selectively in activities and interest groups that will help them achieve the values and purposes which for them are most meaningful. It is important, also, that they learn that there are many things in life that must be omitted in the interest of conserving time and energy and of escaping conflict. In a complex society no individual can find all groups compatible either in ideals, purposes, or goals. One must begin early to understand the things that must be left out in life, as well as the things that are to be retained. Personality integration can be achieved in a complex society only as the person establishes goals in his own mind, selects activities, and limits social participation in the light of these goals. Many of the struggles of young people are undoubtedly caused by their attempts to participate too widely, with resulting conflict, maladjustment, and loss of goals. Some of this disorganizing experience is necessary for those who have too narrow backgrounds, but even for these a reorientation about new goals eventually is essential.

Youth also must at some time in their development, if they are to reach maturity, come to appreciate that many customary norms practiced by large groups have no particular rationality; that a person who would realize his own highest interests must often stand out against these norms.

It is important that youth be directed in a sufficient range of activities and interests so that they will have an appreciation of work as well as leisure, of isolation and meditation as well as constant group activity, of rest as well as feverish activity, of the greatness of nature as well as the brilliance of city lights. They must learn to get along alone as well as in the groups, to be happy in individual achievement as well as in cooperative group activities. Temperamental differences affect individual interests, but the development of a well-rounded, full life involves something of each of them.

The comparative difficulties of transition to adult social experience must be faced by the school. These problems are decidedly different for rural, town, and city youth.

Organizational activities in the small-town and city school sometimes tend toward too great profusion during adolescence, when elaborate extracurricular schedules fill up the students' time. The town adolescent frequently is so overloaded with extracurricular work that he has little time for home activities, and he is so overstimulated that he loses much of the sheer joy of social participation and becomes weary of many things because of an overenrichment of experience. The consolidated rural school, on the other hand, has difficulty in carrying on an extracurricular program because the farm adolescent has chores to do at home and finds it difficult to set aside practice periods for glee club, orchestra, band, football, or basketball. Busses start for home promptly at the close of the school day.

Town pupils feel that home duties which interfere with their participation in activities at school are unjust, whereas farm young people on the whole do not appear to question the priority of home responsibility but seem to enjoy much more than town young people their privilege of participation in extracurricular activities when given the opportunity. Even when the farm adolescent does participate in outside school programs, he usually participates in only one at a time; he cannot spare the time for more.

Ordinarily the farm adolescent, like the farm adult, does not feel the nervous tension of the urban person from too great social contact or intellectual activity. The mental strain of schoolwork is balanced by daily physical labor, and there is little time or opportunity to become bookish or to become too much absorbed in a whirl of social activities.

One does not have to survey extensively the literature dealing with farm youth or that dealing with adult family life on the farm to be convinced that the social experience of a substantial part of our farm population is so limited as to make it questionable whether the farm child and adolescent are being adequately prepared for situations faced by the average adult of today. Farm people ordinarily belong to few social organizations as compared to village, town, and city people and function in fewer social situations.[1]

As would be expected, farm youths often feel ill at ease among people of their own age. Thurow's study of rural girls showed that a much higher percentage of the farm and rural nonfarm girls than of the village girls felt ill at ease when among their contemporaries.[2]

It would seem that school activities should be increased for farm and rural nonfarm adolescents and decreased somewhat for town and city adolescents, or at least spread among a greater number of them in the interest of a better balance.

The lack of social experience of rural youth carries over into their college experience. A study [3] of 1,097 freshman students who entered the State College of Washington in 1936 shows this clearly. At the completion of their college work they were rated in terms of social participation on the basis of an index with the following weights assigned to varying degrees of social participation:

Leadership as indicated by elective office or major-committee appointment	3
Minor-committee appointment and membership in honorary societies	2
Other membership or activity	1

The activity index of Table 32 shows the ratings of the various groups. It will be seen that a high percentage of rural farm and rural nonfarm

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[1] For a sample study, see J. J. Lister and E. L. Kirkpatrick, *Rural Youth Speak*, Fig. 4, American Youth Commission, Washington, D.C., 1939.

[2] Mildred B. Thurow, "Interests, Activities and Problems of Rural Young Folk," p. 43, *Cornell Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* 617, Ithaca, N.Y., 1934, finds that 14.8 per cent of farm girls, 17.4 per cent of nonfarm girls, and 6.4 per cent of village girls reported that they never felt at ease in their own age group.

[3] Raymond W. Hatch and Paul H. Landis, *Social Heritage as a Factor in College Achievement*, Research Studies of the State College of Washington, Vol. X, pp. 215–272, December, 1942.

TABLE 32. *Index of Social Participation of College Graduates with Rural Farm, Rural Nonfarm, and Urban Backgrounds* (*Percentage distribution*)

Activity score by intervals	Total	Rural farm	Rural nonfarm	Urban
0– 4.9	32.6	37.0	41.2	25.2
5– 9.9	21.7	22.0	17.6	23.7
10–14.9	14.7	14.0	10.3	16.3
15–19.9	11.8	14.0	13.2	9.6
20–24.9	8.0	5.0	4.4	12.6
25–29.9	4.8	4.0	5.9	4.4
30 and over	6.4	4.0	7.4	8.2
All scores	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mean activity score *	11.21	9.70	10.99	12.54

* Computed from the individuals' scores, not from the class intervals.

youths have low activity scores. Only a fourth of the urban were in the group with the lowest activity score. In the highest group, with an index of 30 or over, there was twice as high a proportion of urban as of rural farm youth. The mean activity score showed a definite tendency to vary directly with the degree of urbanization, the rural farm group averaging 9.70, the rural nonfarm 10.99, and the urban 12.54.[4]

Urban-reared college students were also found to be fraternity and sorority members more often than farm-reared students (see Fig. 66). Rural nonfarm girls were sorority members more often than urban girls. Football and track awards went more often to urban boys rather than to rural boys, indicating their greater participation and training in these sports during high school.

THE SCHOOL AS AN EXPERIMENTAL LABORATORY

From the standpoint of personality adjustment and self-analysis as well as from the standpoint of self-guidance, which in the end is the most effective kind of guidance, the high school's greatest function is that it permits the adolescent to exercise himself in a variety of situations, thus permitting him to obtain a more or less objective evaluation of his own interests and abilities in comparison with those of his peers. It is this experience which helps the professional guidance expert to steer the adolescent and youth in a direction which is likely to be satisfying to him and bring him to a place of reasonable economic security, social adjustment, and creative endeavor.

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[4] The difference between the mean for the rural farm and urban groups was found to be statistically significant ($P = 0.031$).

The high school is to some extent for all youth, but especially for rural youth from more isolated farm environments, a bridge between the relatively simple world of childhood and the relatively complex world of adulthood. The larger high school is a complex social institution which introduces the adolescent to relatively complex social situations. This provides the broadening experience that must of necessity come as the individual makes the transition from childhood to adulthood in a complex society where mobility continuously expands the geographic, ecological, and social horizons of most individuals.

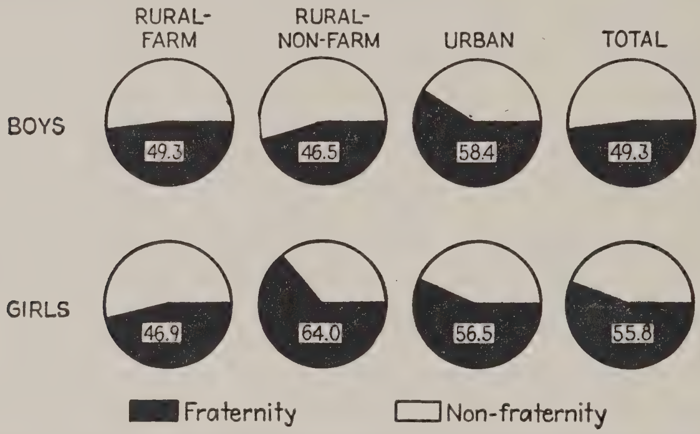

Fig. 66. Fraternity and Sorority Memberships of College Students by Residence and Sex.

The limited social participation of young people of farm background persists through college. (*Raymond W. Hatch and Paul H. Landis, "Social Heritage as a Factor in College Achievement," Research Studies of the State College of Washington,* 10:215–272, *December,* 1942.)

What has been said here about the modern high school could be said with equal or greater truth about the college. The difference is that the college affects a relatively small percentage of the population and affects them after they have already gone through the broadening experience of the high school.

For the group that goes to college, however, the college represents another stage in the transition from a simple world of childhood to the complex world of adulthood, for the college environment provides for increasing self-sufficiency, imposes upon youth responsibility for self-decision, challenges him with complex situations and problems, introduces him to an even greater range of social experience, permits him to test his abilities interests, and capacities in situations among peers that are even more rigidly competitive, since his peers are themselves a highly select group skimmed off the upper levels of ability of the high-school population, and forces him into habits of competing with a group with ambitions that lead him to expect much more of himself than do the average run of the population.

When one has said all this in favor of the school as an experimental laboratory, the fact still remains that the school has not adequately met its full responsibility. The New York Regents' Inquiry concludes on this point:[5]

> Although these pupils had been members of the school group for years, teachers and principals were unable to identify any special abilities for the great majority of them . . . little attention has been given to the discovery of unusual strengths and weaknesses . . . boys and girls have gained from school experiences only the most casual appreciation of their own peculiar talents and skills. Even more serious is the school's inability to recommend at least a fourth of all leaving pupils as ready to take a constructive part in the activities of the factory, office, or farm, and in the broader social relationships of home, community, and state.

THE SCHOOL'S VOCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The old school program was basically a one-track program. Its aim was academic training for further education. Some schools today are still of this pattern, although the two-track program is now more common. One curriculum aims toward academic advancement, and the other aims directly at vocational training. Even a more diversified program is needed in the average school system. Guidance loses a considerable part of its effectiveness if the school program is not versatile enough to train the student in the direction of his aptitudes. The school must also be equipped to follow up guidance and training with actual placement in the labor market. Studies of the American Youth Commission[6] showed clearly that young people sense a vital need for help in locating the jobs for which they are best fitted. They resort to everything from palm reading to blind trial and error in finding their way toward suitable vocations. Bell made the following indictment of education's failure to meet adequately the needs of youth in both fields. He indicated that they had found youth trying

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[5] Ruth E. Eckert and Thomas O. Marshall, *When Youth Leave School,* p. 119, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1938.

[6] Howard M. Bell, "The Maryland Study of the American Youth Commission," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 194:187–196, November, 1937.

> . . . to find adequate satisfaction in such things as a secondary education that still prepares them for colleges that most of them will never see, in a system of vocational training that continues to train them for jobs that most of them will never find, and colleges of "liberal" arts that develop cultural tastes that a larger society refuses to satisfy. . . .

A study of high-school pupils' anxieties in the public schools of Manitowoc, Wis.,[7] showed that vocational problems were most troublesome among sophomores, juniors, and seniors in high school. Pupils were asked to list their three major problems in the order of their importance. Reports were anonymous. The results as classified into categories by the researcher are shown in Table 33.

An excellent summary of the special vocational problems of rural youth is given by Melvin and Smith.[8]

> Guidance toward occupations is almost entirely lacking in rural areas. Youth commonly pass through the rural school curriculum with the hazy assumption that they are being prepared to enter adult life. But the preparation they receive other than that core of knowledge recognized as general fundamental training too often has only indirect relation to their future work. Most youth enter adult occupations by chance. Giving them greater opportunities for both general and specific occupational training and for learning more about occupational openings is a special need facing rural America.
>
> Rural schools are responsible for the training and guidance of three broad groups of pupils: those who will go into commercial agriculture; those who will enter nonagricultural occupations in either rural or urban areas; and a third large group comprising those who under present circumstances are destined to remain in rural territory living on the land on a more or less self-sufficing basis. It is being increasingly recognized that one of the first duties of the school is the discovery of the particular potentialities and aptitudes of the developing pupil so that on reaching the youth age the individual has

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[7] Hugh S. Bonar, "High-school Pupils List Their Anxieties," *School Review,* 50:512–515, September, 1942.

[8] Bruce L. Melvin and E. N. Smith, *Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects,* p. 119, Research Monograph XV, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D.C., 1938.

TABLE 33. *Problems Considered Most Vital by High-school Pupils**

Problem causing concern	Frequency of mention of problem			
	As first in importance	As second in importance	As third in importance	Total
364 seniors				
1. Getting a job	126	51	18	195
2. Preparing for a vocation	60	43	20	123
3. War problems	27	44	19	90
4. School problems	47	13	9	69
5. Social problems	15	29	23	67
6. Future plans	24	18	10	52
7. Marriage problems	4	25	22	51
8. Educational plans	14	24	8	46
9. Present family problems	9	12	7	28
10. Religious problems	10	12	5	27
11. Personal problems	7	5	5	17
12. Attaining or keeping good health	6	3	2	11
13. Miscellaneous problems	15	23	12	50
422 juniors				
1. Preparing for a vocation	96	68	34	198
2. Getting a job	102	50	13	165
3. School problems	58	36	12	106
4. Future plans	45	32	11	88
5. Social problems	38	23	26	87
6. War problems	14	25	16	55
7. Educational plans	23	21	6	50
8. Marriage problems	8	15	17	40
9. Personal problems	10	17	6	33
10. Present family problems	9	4	2	15
11. Religious problems	9	...	...	9
12. Attaining or keeping good health	2	1	4	7
13. Miscellaneous problems	8	19	6	33
443 sophomores				
1. Preparing for a vocation	111	94	39	244
2. School problems	80	44	17	141
3. Getting a job	74	35	16	125
4. Future plans	51	22	19	92
5. Social problems	30	33	28	91
6. Marriage problems	11	29	27	67
7. War problems	26	22	13	61
8. Educational plans	25	10	2	37
9. Money problems	5	10	9	24
10. Attaining or keeping good health	10	8	5	23
11. Present family problems	5	8	10	23
12. Personal problems	5	9	7	21
13. Religious problems	6	3	...	9
14. Miscellaneous problems	4	12	13	29

* Hugh S. Bonor, "High-school Pupils List Their Anxieties," *School Review*, 50:512–515, September, 1942.

> some idea of the vocation or vocations in which he or she could reasonably expect to succeed if given additional and proper training. It is, of course, not to be expected that every rural high school can be equipped to train youth in a wide variety of skills, but there are certain fields in which they must provide training if a large proportion of rural young people are to have any vocational training at all. Vocational training in agriculture is doing much to prepare youth for farming, but with all the efforts in this direction it is doubtful if at present enough youth are being trained in high schools and college to provide an adequate number of farmers to raise the agricultural products needed for market at the highest possible level of efficiency and at the same time to operate their farms in accordance with the best principles of soil conservation.

Much can be done through testing youth's aptitudes to fit into various vocations. More can be done by providing opportunity for part-time employment, either within the school or in many areas with the cooperation of industrial organizations in the community. This kind of experience, of course, is practically an impossibility in the smaller rural high school for young people who plan to migrate into urban industry. This large group of future workers faces the most difficult problem of any group in America from the standpoint of making a transition to the work world. The school must at least apprise them properly of vocational opportunities of nearby urban communities, give them some idea of how to contact employers, and deal with other general aspects of vocational education. It is possible, also, that these schools might work out opportunities for summer employment in urban businesses and industries.

The American Youth Commission study of Maryland youth showed that a very small proportion of them, only about 20 per cent, had received vocational guidance in the school (see Fig. 67 on page 403). Many of those who had received it had not found it adequate, as is seen by the data in Table 34.

A more recent study[9] in Michigan shows that little more than half of senior-high-school youth have had a conference with anyone in the school or community concerning their lifework (see Fig. 68).

Well over a third of 5,500 seniors in Washington high schools faced graduation feeling that no one in their school had the ability to help them make a choice of a vocation (see Fig. 69, page 405).[10]

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[9] *Youth and the World of Work,* Social Research Service, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Mich., 1949.

[10] For additional data on Washington high-school youth by size of school, refer again to Figs. 48 and 49, pp. 337 and 338.

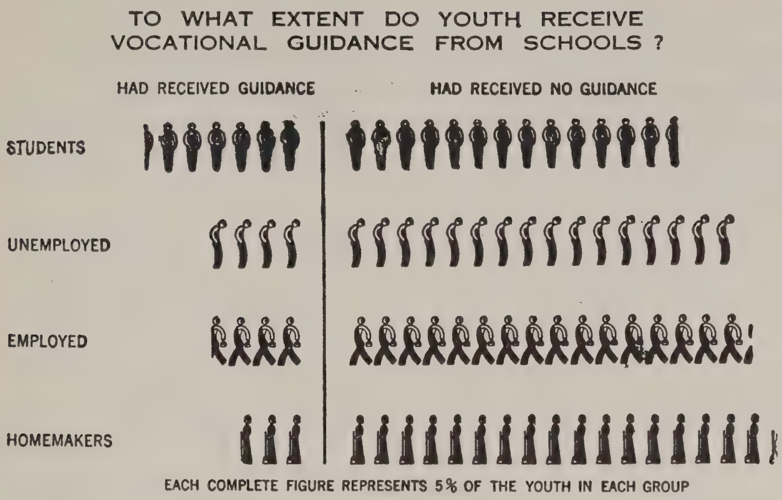

FIG. 67. THE MAJORITY HAD NO EFFECTIVE VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE.

Only 20 per cent of over 13,000 students had received vocational guidance in the school. Many of them did not find it helpful. See table below. (*Howard M. Bell, Youth Tell Their Story, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.,* 1938, *p.* 73.)

TABLE 34. *Relation between Vocational Guidance Received and Youth's Appraisal of the Economic Value of Their Schooling, among* 10,898 *Maryland Youth* *

Economic value of schooling	Employed youth		Unemployed youth	
	No guidance, per cent	Helpful school guidance, per cent	No guidance, per cent	Helpful school guidance, per cent
No help	12.1	5.3	16.0	6.0
Little help	19.7	9.1	21.4	15.2
Fair amount of help	22.3	14.2	20.5	16.3
Considerable help	20.0	26.1	20.4	26.3
Great help	25.9	45.3	21.7	36.2

* Howard M. Bell, *Youth Tell Their Story*, p. 78, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1938.

Bell, reporting for the American Youth Commission,[11] believed that vocational education is a universal need of youth. Vocational training, in the specific sense of learning a particular job and the skills involved in it, is not a universal need. By guidance is usually meant a rather continuous process of directing the child so that he may find himself in relation to his environment. By vocational education is meant training in the broader objectives, philosophies, and virtues of the work world, exploring a variety of occupational fields, and learning as much as possible of the nature of a number of occupations. Vocational training usually involves the actual development of the skills required for a particular kind of job or group of jobs in the school system or through apprentice experience in industry.

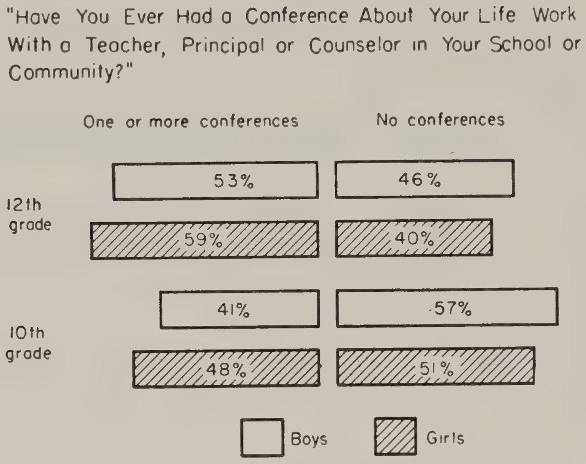

Fig. 68. More Than Half of This Teen Group Had Had a Conference about Life Work.

This study covers 6,789 high-school pupils and was made in the spring of 1948. (*Social Research Service, Michigan State College.*)

Youth are often misguided by the rather spurious values that have come to predominate in our culture or by profit-motivated organizations that sell vocational training. It is reported that in 1934, 150,000 students finished their schooling in bookkeeping. In that year only about 36,000 bookkeeping positions were open to persons under twenty. The field of Diesel engineering prior to the Second World War was widely exploited. High-pressure salesmanship by private schools led to the training of 100,000 students in this field. The industry employed less than 5,000 new men per year, and most of those were men who had had training and experience with gasoline engines.[12] In the thirties aircraft schools carried on similar programs and lured many youth who had no possibilities of using their training in a peacetime economy. Other fields that are exploited at times are beauty colleges, commercial training schools, air-conditioning schools, schools for art, dancing, television, mechanics, designing, etc. Many of these schools promise to teach by correspondence courses that can be taught only in the laboratory or shop.[13]

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[11] Howard M. Bell, *Matching Youth and Jobs,* Chap. 2, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1940.

After the Second World War there was much misguided training of veterans by exploitative training programs that led toward no practical vocation.[14]

The American Youth Commission, in studying youth and jobs, selected a sample of some 2,216 occupations in 18 industries thought to be representative of approximately 70 per cent of American workers and learned the minimum educational specifications required by employers in hiring workers. Table 35 presents these data.[15] It is a surprising fact that almost half required no education other than ability to speak, read, and write English. Slightly under 30 per cent required high-school graduation or college training.

A further study of these jobs showed that normal production could be reached with comparatively little experience on the job. More than two-thirds required no experience or a week or less. Less than 10 per cent required as much as six months' experience.

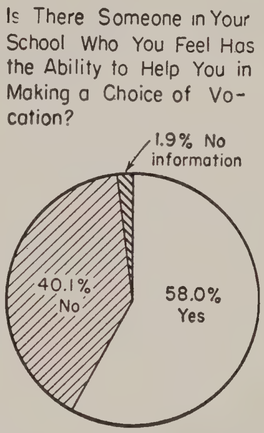

FIG. 69. MANY LACK CONFIDENCE IN THE COMPETENCE OF SCHOOL VOCATIONAL ADVISERS. (*L. J. Elias, High School Youth Look at Their Problems, College Bookstore, Washington State College, Pullman, Wash.*, 1949.)

Another study of work-world experience shows clearly that most training

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[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 49–50.

[13] For an excellent summary of the extent and nature of operations of proprietary schools, see Eckert and Marshall, *op. cit.*, pp. 221–227.

[14] For an elaboration of this point, refer to p. 425. For a study of some of these programs, see *Report on Education and Training under the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, as Amended,* 81st Congress, 2d Session, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1950.

[15] Bell, *Matching Youth and Jobs,* p. 56.

TABLE 35. *Minimum Educational Specifications of Employers in Hiring for* 2,216 *Occupations in* 18 *Industries*

Minimum educational specifications	Percentage of occupations
None	47.1
Some elementary school	7.8
Elementary-school graduation	12.1
Some high school	3.8
High-school graduation	20.2
Some college	2.5
College graduation	6.5

of men now employed on jobs was received on the job rather than in schools or through special training institutions. The results are shown in Table 36.[16]

TABLE 36. *Sources of Training of* 3,905 *Workers in* 66 *Minnesota Plants,* 1931–1932

Source of training	Number of workers	Per cent
All sources	3,905	100.0
No training	14	0.4
Instruction by foremen	2,190	56.0
Instruction by other workers	1,504	38.5
Special training institution	12	0.3
Vocational school	2	0.1
Apprenticeship	175	4.5
High school	0	0.0
College	8	0.2

The American Youth Commission stated the view that the problem of vocational training in schools is largely a matter of revision of the administration of the school program rather than a matter of large expenditures for equipment and additional training within the school system. Bell, writing for the commission, concludes:[17]

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[16] V. C. Fryklund, *The Selection and Training of Modern Factory Workers,* p. 17, Employment Stabilization Research Institute, University of Minnesota Press, Minne apolis, 1934.

[17] Bell, *Matching Youth and Jobs,* p. 64.

Three tendencies are operating to relieve the schools of the responsibility of providing young people with specialized vocational training. First, the limited extent to which modern occupations require such training. Second, the important role industry is playing in the provision of this training. And finally, the possibilities of the unfortunately slow but clearly obvious tendency to expand programs of apprenticeship, so that the schools' responsibility should be increasingly limited to the provision of part-time instruction related to the apprentice's needs.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE HIGH-SCHOOL GRADUATE[18]

Although the high school is responsible for the custodial care of youth during a period of four years, its program and activities should be operated, as has been indicated in the foregoing discussion, with a consciousness at all times of the aftercommencement role that youth is to play. In wartime the curriculum was immediately adjusted to equip young men for the roles they were going to have to play in a nation at war. At all times there is some consciousness of postcommencement roles of youth, but often lack of full understanding. Unless the high school does keep its work oriented to postcommencement roles, it is questionable whether it should have the custodial care of the majority of youth during the period of early adolescence. This can be done only by repeated follow-up studies of youth after they have gone beyond the scope of the high school.[19]

Some school systems now have regular follow-ups of aftercommencement roles of youth.[20] Repeated study is essential since social roles change so rapidly in a dynamic society. Every school system should at all times be operated with a conscious knowledge of the various types of social, economic, and cultural worlds in which various youth in the school population are going to be expected to perform and do everything possible to prepare them for these adjustments, not only in terms of skill and techniques, but in the terms of attitudes by giving an understanding of the values and codes and expectations of the particular kind of a world into which the youth is going to go.

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[18] For a more comprehensive discussion of problems involved in the transition from school to work than can be attempted here, see Delbert C. Miller and William H. Form, *Industrial Sociology: An Introduction to the Sociology of Work Relations,* Chap. 17, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1951.

[19] The outstanding study of this character is the New York Regents' Inquiry (Eckert and Marshall) cited repeatedly in this chapter.

[20] Such studies have been made by the school system of Seattle, Wash., for several classes. The author has made annual studies of a more general character for all high-school graduates in the state of Washington.

A portion will go on to college; another portion will go immediately into an occupation; another substantial proportion will go immediately into the family as homemakers. Some will remain in their home community; others will move out into a larger or different community. They must become accustomed to employer-employee relationships; they must become acquainted with organizations and institutions which will serve them or through which they can express their interests as they make the transition to their new places in the social structure.

The understanding of this problem is one for every school system because every community is in a sense unique in the opportunities it offers to youth and in the things it requires of them after high school. In many communities follow-up studies will show that practically every youth leaves the immediate environment; migrating to college communities or to urban centers to obtain work may be the typical pattern. In such communities the duty of the school to fit youth for this transition is obvious and its discharge imperative. In other communities a large proportion of the youth go immediately into industry, finding occupational outlet. Some tend to marry early so that a considerable proportion of the girls face immediately after high school the problem of establishing a home and caring for children. In such communities the problem is very different from that in more sophisticated school environments where a high proportion of the youth intend to go on to college or into some other specialized kind of training, entering into the more realistic world of adult experience only after another long period of training in some form of artificial environment.

In every large school system the aftercommencement roles of various groups in a school population differ. To the extent that it is possible to understand the role which each of these groups is to play, to that extent it is possible for the school to deal intelligently with this group, both in their training and in their orientation to aftercommencement activities.

Even in an industrial state like New York, the Regents' Inquiry shows the inadequacy of school preparation for realistic life situations in the work world.[21]

> Pupils know little about business and industrial life before they leave school. . . . Many pupils demonstrated their ignorance of the requirements of employers . . . did not even know how to apply for jobs . . . were not advised

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[21] Eckert and Marshall, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

> about future training which they might need . . . fell into the hands of racketeering schools.

The report states further that "Employers frequently mentioned that the schools' recommendations of applicants for positions were almost worthless."[22]

The indictment extends even further than to a lack of reality in understanding the work world. The school also failed to prepare pupils for leisure: "Lines of educational and recreational activity started in school were usually discontinued immediately after the pupils left school."[23]

Unfortunately, the school system, in spite of all the new responsibilities it has shouldered, has not taken responsibility enough, considering the role schools must play in a dynamic society. The transition from the school to outside society is still too abrupt and final. The school must not only learn more of the behavior and adjustment problems of the student after he leaves school but must also develop plans and personnel to help follow him through in making his adjustments to life. College and high-school placement bureaus are a step in this direction, but further advice and counsel for those who are not ready to be placed or who find themselves unsatisfactorily placed in life seem to offer a challenge to the school for greater service.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the new responsibilities that the school has had to assume.
2. Relate these new responsibilities to social changes that have taken place in America.
3. Discuss the pros and cons of extensive social participation.
4. Point out the value of selective participation.
5. Compare the school activity problems of the town and country adolescent.
6. Discuss the handicaps of farm young people growing out of too limited social experience.
7. Discuss the school as an experimental laboratory.
8. Discuss the school as a transitional experience for youth reared in isolated environments.
9. Is there evidence that the secondary school and college have not yet fully met their responsibility to young people? Explain.
10. What do we mean by a one- and a two-track program in the secondary school?

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[22] *Ibid.*, p. 315.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 312.

11. Is vocational guidance enough or must it be in the direction of work opportunity? Discuss.

12. Do high-school pupils think about a vocation? Cite evidence.

13. What other problems concern them?

14. Discuss the special problems of rural youth in the occupational field.

15. Compare problems of providing industrial vocational experience for city and farm youth.

16. Did youth during the depression find vocational guidance helpful? Cite data.

17. Distinguish between vocational training, vocational guidance, and vocational education. Which needs to be made most universal?

18. Cite evidence showing that youth without vocational education are often victimized by proprietary schools.

19. Does the average industrial job require much school training? Summarize the evidence.

20. How are most industrial jobs learned?

21. What did the American Youth Commission conclude regarding the school's proper place in the vocational preparation of youth?

22. Why is it important that the school have in mind at all times the after-school roles of young people? How may follow-up studies be helpful in this connection?

23. Is there evidence that the school is not now sufficiently conscious of the aftergraduation roles of adolescents and youth? Cite evidence in the economic field. The recreational.

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CHAPTER 24

Parity of Educational Opportunity for Adolescents and Youth

Equality of educational opportunity has always been a part of the American dream, but it is a dream that has never been fully realized; perhaps one that shall never be completely realized. Among the great disadvantage groups are children and youth in the deep South where poverty of resources in ratio to population makes it extremely difficult, even with a high per capita cost for education, for young people to have an opportunity for schooling equal to that of many northern and western states with a lower birth rate.

In the rural population, because of geographical isolation, it is difficult to provide parity of educational opportunity. One-room schools are still numerous (see Fig. 70) and provide an inadequate background compared to large urban school systems, with their highly specialized curriculums, large school plants, and more qualified teachers. Moreover, education is not valued as highly among adults in rural communities even today as among urban people, for, generally speaking, rural people are more poorly educated than urban people and have been through the generations. The immediate demands of the work world and the practical realities of life in the rural environment often seem more imposing than the need for an education, which is delaying responsibilities for future gain. This leads many rural young people to terminate their education early (see Table 37).

Finally, there has never been parity of educational opportunity for the nonwhite races. This is partly due to the fact that the nonwhite races are concentrated in the deep South and Southwest where natural resources are meager compared to the birth rate. Moreover, prejudices bar the gates of learning to many, because of the inadequate facilities provided for colored groups. Since an educational disadvantage in childhood and youth, particularly in youth at the high-school and college ages, spells unequal economic opportunity for a lifetime, unequal health, and an unequal standard of living, the problem of educational opportunity is of more than theoretical interest in a democratic society. It is the key to a better life for disadvantaged groups, and a vigorous attack by the school system on inequalities in this field is essential if these other inequities are to be met and corrected. Let us therefore consider briefly the facts concerning educational opportunity for these disadvantaged groups.

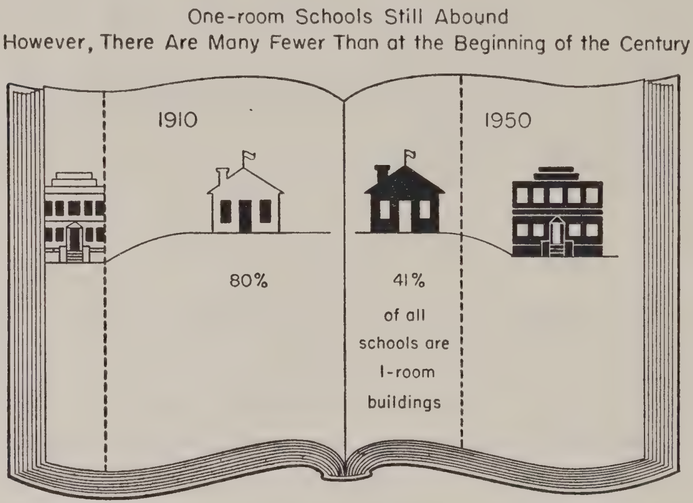


FIG. 70. IN 1950, 41 PER CENT OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS WERE ONE-ROOM STRUCTURES.

Although an obsolete institution for most communities, the one-room school still exists. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

TABLE 37. *Percentage of Youth from Rural Farm, Rural Nonfarm, and Urban Areas Attending School, by Single Years of Age Groups,* 1950 *

Years	United States total	Rural farm	Rural nonfarm	Urban
10–13	96.1	95.2	95.4	96.8
14–17	84.4	78.7	82.4	87.5
18–20	28.7	19.2	19.8	34.2
21–24	11.5	5.7	6.5	14.1

* "Children and Youth: 1950," *Current Population Reports, Series P*-20, *No.* 32, Dec. 4, 1950, and "General Characteristics of the Population of the United States: April 1, 1950," *Current Population Reports, Series PC*-7, *No.* 1, Feb. 25, 1951.

THE RATIO OF CHILDREN TO ADULTS

This ratio of children to adults is one of the best indices of the burden that the adult generation carries for the education of children and youth. Note on the map and the bar charts with it (Fig. 71) the comparative load of children from zero to eighteen years of age per 100 adults eighteen to sixty-four years of age, a ratio of the dependent group to those in the working ages. In the Northeast and the Far West, the load is extremely light, 45 and 48, respectively, dependents per 100 adults. At the other extreme, in the deep South, the load is 65 per 100, and in the Great Plains area it is 55 per 100.

In the bar chart at the left, the difference in load that the farm population carries is compared to that of the rural nonfarm and of the urban. The farm population has 72 dependents per 100 working people; the urban community, only 43. The load of the farm group is more than a third greater than that of the urban group. Little wonder that urban schools can provide a much better educational program with less per capita cost. When one considers that in the farm community transportation offers an added burden, the discrepancy in the educational burden becomes even greater.

Note also the comparison at the right between the educational load of the races. The white carries a burden of 49 dependents per 100 adults; the nonwhite races, 66 per 100 adults. Remember that these nonwhite races are for the most part located in the belt of the nation where resources in relation to the child population are extremely low. In this area, in fact, the birth rate is so high that education is difficult, not only for whites, but also for the nonwhites.

Converted to a financial basis, the capacity of the states to support education is illustrated in Fig. 72 in terms of per capita income for children and youth. The per capita income in 1948 of the various states is shown on the left hand and the per capita expenditure per pupil for the same age on the right. In New York, where per capita income was $1,800, expenditure per pupil ran about $250. At the opposite extreme, in Mississippi, where the per capita income was considerably under $1,200, the expenditure per pupil was around $75.

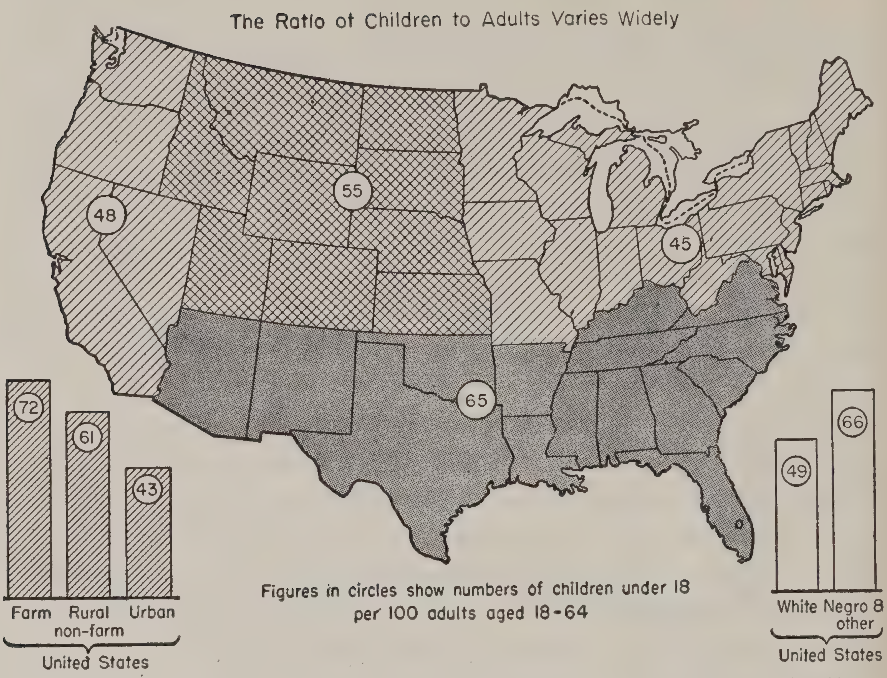

The Ratio of Children to Adults Varies Widely
55
48
45
65
72
61
43
Farm
Rural non-farm
Urban
United States
Figures in circles show numbers of children under 18 per 100 adults aged 18-64
49
66
White
Negro & other
United States

FIG. 71. RATIO OF DEPENDENTS, 0–18 YEARS, TO THE WORKING POPULATION, 18–64.

The school load is heavy in the South and in farming areas. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

THE EXPANSION OF THE SCHOOL FOR THE ADOLESCENT PERIOD

The high school, which originally had as its primary objective preparation of a selected few for college attendance and ultimate professional leadership, has gradually become the near-universal institution for the training of adolescents. Whereas in 1890 less than 10 per cent of the population fourteen to seventeen years of age was in school and in 1910 only about 15 per cent, by 1949 almost 82.6 per cent was in school (see Fig. 73).

Secondary education has, therefore, become the new institution for the period of adolescence. The view that all adolescents should come under the scope of the secondary-school system is gaining in popularity. Meeting the needs of this age group becomes, therefore, a matter of secondary-school administration, curriculum building, and organization. Obviously, to meet adequately the needs of this entire group has already required broadening of the curriculum to provide guidance, vocational experience, vocational

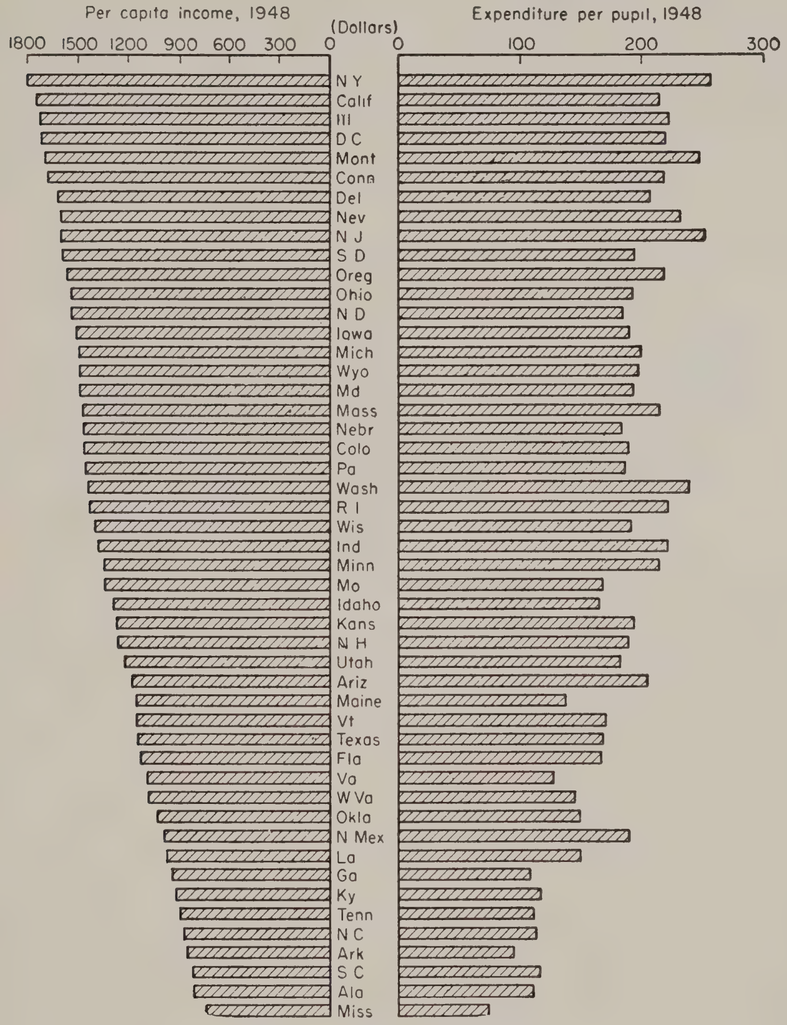


FIG. 72. PER CAPITA INCOME AND PER CAPITA EXPENDITURES FOR EDUCATION IN THE STATES, 1948.

Low state per capita income means low expenditures for education of children and youth. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

education, and, also, a greater breadth of motivation so that the secondary-school system can hold not only those who are intellectually inclined but also those whose primary motivations must be sought in mechanical skill, dexterity, and more practical life activities.

At various points in the preceding chapters we have discussed the problems of orienting the school system more completely to life as it will be faced by the young adolescent as he enters society. It is also clear that, for many, terminal education must be provided at the tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grades. To discharge its obligation fully as a social institution handling most of the problems of the adolescent period, the school must not only make sure that the adolescent is retained in school until he obtains the minimum of essential social and economic competence but must also follow him out into life to see that he finds a satisfactory place for himself and makes adequate adjustment. In many cases further education or training will be found necessary.

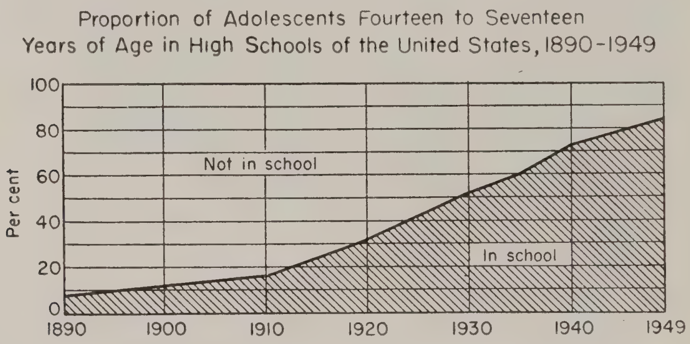


Fig. 73. Most Teen-agers under Eighteen Are in School Now.

The secondary school is rapidly becoming the social institution of the adolescent period. (*Based on data from Biennial Survey of Education,* 1934–36, *Vol.* II, *Chap.* 1, *p.* 12; *David T. Blose, Advance Statistics of State School Systems,* 1937–1938 *and* 1939–1940, *U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C.; and "School Enrollment of the Civilian Population: October, 1949," Bureau of the Census, Series P-*20, *No.* 30, *April* 26, 1950.)

The Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth chart shows the trend of grade- and high-school enrollments. Note the drop in number of pupils caused by the low depression birth rate and then the rise that is expected by 1960 because of the high birth rates of the Second World War and the period following. (See Fig. 74.)

This creates new demands on school plants and school facilities if the needs of adolescents and youth are to be met adequately. In early 1951, the U.S. Office of Education wrote of what it would take to bring the nations' lagging school system up to the anticipated needs. "One out of five schoolhouses now in use throughout the country should be abandoned or extensively remodeled." To replace obsolete classrooms, accommodate the 9,338,000 additional new pupils expected in primary and secondary schools within the next ten years, and allow for other changes, the United States will need a minimum of 520,000 new classrooms by 1960. Estimated cost: $14,040,000,000.

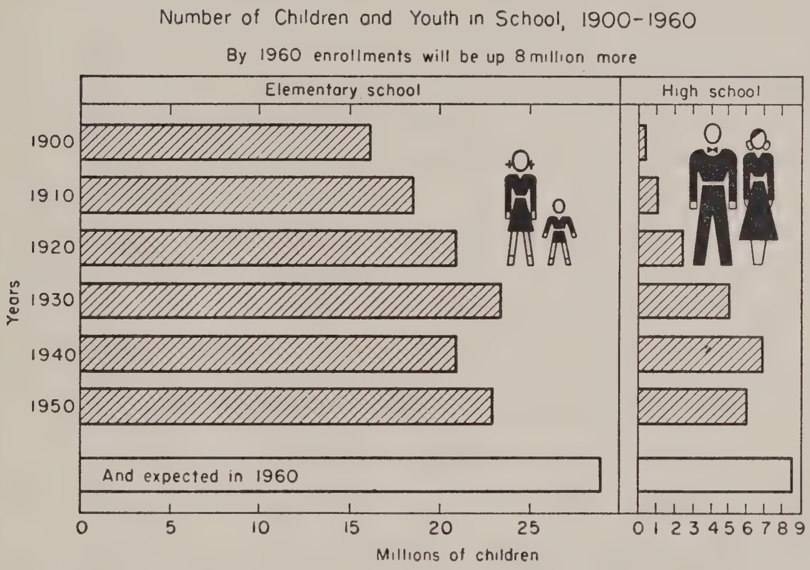


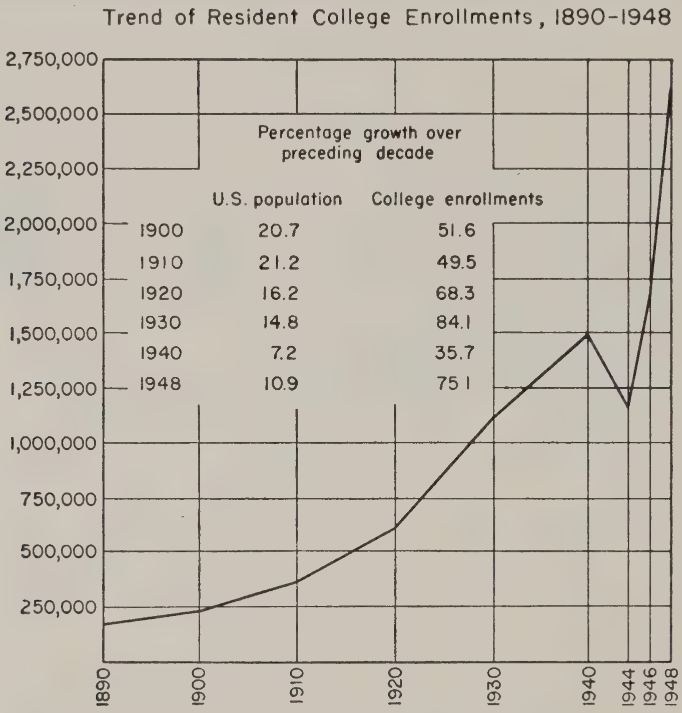
FIG. 74. SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS ARE CLIMBING.

Observe the projected increase from 1950 to 1960 and consider how the school will handle the added 8 million pupils. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

Delayed entry into the work world and the increasing demand for college-trained persons have led to a growing proportion of those above the high-school age continuing their schooling. There has been a constant rise in both the numbers and proportions of those of college age going to college. (For a summary of trends in numbers in college see Fig. 75.)

The rise of the junior college is in part responsible for the rapid increase in college attendance. In most urban communities the junior college is a home institution and represents no marked transition from the high school.

For many, its program is one of terminal education. But education at the higher levels is also on the increase, and in spite of the high enrollments encouraged by the GI Bill following the years after the Second World War, professional personnel in many fields is still below national needs. This seems to indicate that we may expect college education to increase in popularity.



Trend of Resident College Enrollments, 1890-1948

Percentage growth over preceding decade

	U.S. population	College enrollments
1900	20.7	51.6
1910	21.2	49.5
1920	16.2	68.3
1930	14.8	84.1
1940	7.2	35.7
1948	10.9	75.1

Fig. 75. The Increase in College Attendance Has Far Exceeded the Increase in Population in the Nation.

That we sense the need for trained personnel in the nation is indicated by the fact that the armed forces deferred young men for higher education during the Korean war. Prior to its outbreak, Dr. Slichter, Harvard economist, thinking of peacetime needs for trained persons, said[1] that for many years to come the demand for professional and technical persons would exceed that for laborers. His reasons for thinking so were that, as incomes rose, the people of the nation would be able to afford more services of doctors, dentists, architects, artists, musicians, actors, and teachers and that industries would need more research and technical improvement to meet competition.

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[1] Sumner H. Slichter, "No More Big Depressions!" *Coronet,* 28:28–31, July, 1950.

ECONOMIC HANDICAPS TO EDUCATION

That many young people, even in a period of great prosperity, are concerned about finances and living conditions in their home as they affect their parents, themselves, and their prospect for continued education is indicated by Table 38 which shows the proportion of some 5,500 high school seniors in the state of Washington who checked the items listed in the spring of 1947 prior to their graduation from high school. Note that many are concerned about the fact that their parents have to work too hard, about the fact they cannot afford college attendance, about financial worries in the family, about their lack of privacy in their own home, and other such factors, all of which cannot help but affect their school progress and future school plans.

A few indicate that they are ashamed because they have less money than their friends, and a few are ashamed to bring their friends to their home.

SUBSIDIZED EDUCATION FOR ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

A great deal has been accomplished in the United States to remove economic handicaps. The usual method has been for society to take over the responsibility for assuring the minimum essentials of well-being as this concept is progressively defined in a democratic society. Society has now taken over the problem of universal education of the child in the grades. Public schools are no longer considered pauper schools as they were in early American life. More recently the almost universal free high school has been added. Purchase of schoolbooks at public expense has removed in the grade school and in some high schools a further economic handicap for education through the adolescent period.

Economic handicaps have been somewhat removed at the college level by state institutions, which in some states are tuition-free and which in most states require low tuition. The tuition-free local junior college is reducing the cost of education further in small cities where youth can live at home during the first two college years.

Even yet, however, education during the adolescent-youth period is denied many young people because stringent economic circumstances in many families require that the child enter the work world early to help provide

TABLE 38. *Percentage of 5,500 High-school Seniors Who Checked Certain Personal Problems in the Field of Family Finance and Living Conditions* *

Economic problem	Boys	Girls
Parents work too hard	18.1	17.8
Have to work to buy things	18.7	12.7
Afraid I can't afford college	14.3	12.9
Have no regular allowance	8.6	13.4
Wish I had my own room	7.2	12.9
Mother has to work	7.4	11.5
Family worries about money	7.7	10.8
Need help getting educated	8.9	9.4
Don't have much spending money	8.3	8.3
Wish we owned our home	7.2	8.5
Don't like house we live in	5.8	8.8
I have no privacy at home	5.4	8.3
Can't afford items others have	5.1	6.8
Wish I could live by myself	3.8	5.8
Too many relatives around	2.7	4.9
Don't like our neighborhood	3.5	3.9
Being away from home too much	3.8	3.5
Having less money than friends	4.0	3.3
Ashamed to bring friends home	3.2	3.2
Don't belong in the family	2.1	3.9
Family interferes too much	2.4	2.9
Father expects too much help	2.8	1.9
Afraid of my father	1.1	3.0
The part of town we live in	1.5	2.6
Mother expects too much help	1.7	2.5
Can't work for myself	1.8	1.4
Work to help support family	2.1	0.9
Not being wanted at home	0.9	1.6
Ashamed of my father's job	0.8	0.6
Afraid of my mother	0.3	0.7
Can't keep money I earn	0.5	0.6

* L. J. Elias, *High School Youth Look at Their Problems*, The College Bookstore, State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., January, 1949.

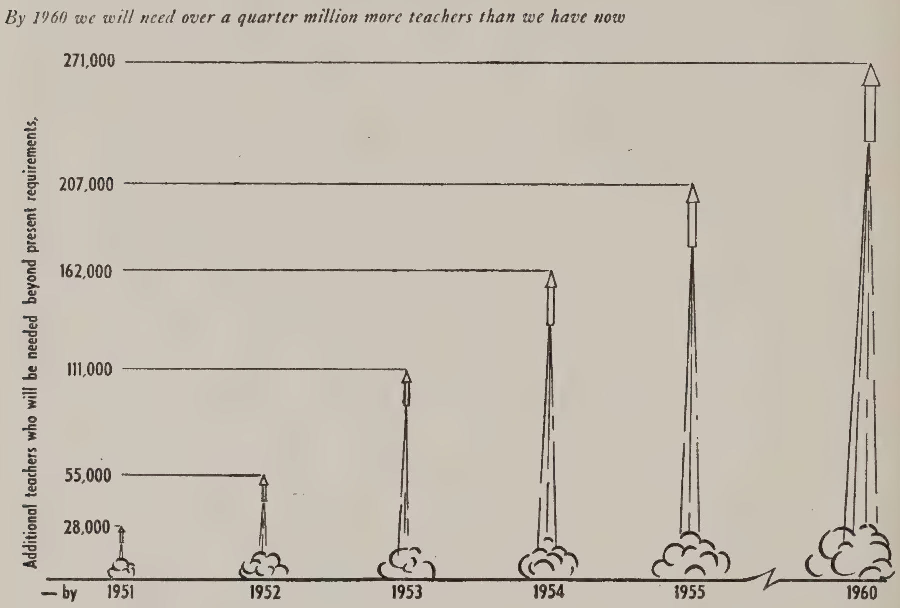
for the family. On the personal level one of the major problems of equalizing educational advantage for adolescents and youth is that of providing special income to the working family so that they can afford to let their young people of high-school and college age remain in school and, on the other hand, to make possible work opportunity or to subsidize education to the extent that capable youth in these age groups will be able to spend their time in school instead of being forced to make a living during the later days of adolescence and the early years of youth. Certainly it is a fact that economic limitations of their parental home unfavorably affect many youths' opportunities to obtain education at both the high-school and college level.

The National Youth Administration, which was established in 1935 and which existed until the early part of the Second World War, assisted more than 1,800,000 youths in securing a high-school or college education. This program provided worthy youth in high schools, colleges, and graduate schools a means of earning their way in school at Federal expense by doing necessary work in school or community while attending school. This was a modest step in the direction of subsidized education by removing economic handicaps for adolescents and youths who were in need of further schooling.

The most extensive subsidy of education to date, and a subsidy which took into account family responsibility, was that established under the GI Bill following the Second World War. This bill for the first time created an opportunity for those in the lower economic classes, who had never given college a thought, to attend college with a subsidy which not only provided for them while in school, but, in the case of married veterans, provided also for their families. This program zoomed college attendance to unprecedented levels, and although many educators were critical of the program at the beginning in that they felt many of the older men would be too rusty to profit by college education and that the group in general would lead to a lowering of college standards, the veterans lived down these fears by performing in above average manner, by applying themselves seriously to their work, by maintaining a mature adult attitude toward the purpose and goals of education, and by actually shouldering the load of an education while being husbands and fathers.

This program removed all doubt of the capability of many of the lower classes to profit from education at higher levels.

Whether or not this pattern should be adopted in peacetime for all youth of a certain level of ability is one which our society might well debate and consider. If education is the ladder upward in a democracy, as we have always supposed, if it does increase the level of economic and social competence of our citizenry, if it does make them more intelligent voters and more useful citizens, then our society, if it can afford the investment, might well consider subsidy of college marriage and subsidy of college education as a device not only for equalizing opportunity but for strengthening its own future by a more able citizenry.



By 1960 we will need over a quarter million more teachers than we have now

FIG. 76. THE NUMBER OF NEW TEACHERS NEEDED ANNUALLY, 1951–1960.

In the ten years 1951–1960, more than a quarter of a million new teachers are needed to handle America's schools. This is illustrative of the increasing demand for professionally trained persons. The demand for nurses and doctors is also great. Is this evidence in favor of subsidized college training? (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

In wartime we have been made particularly aware of the value of training in helping youth to cope with circumstances of battlefield, factory, and political administration We now recognize that modern survival may depend upon science as much as upon force of arms, on brainpower as well as manpower, and it is in this field where we can excel in the future. Many peoples of the world can be more prolific, can provide more youths for cannon fodder. Few nations have the democratic tradition which believes in the initiative of the well-trained, which believes in the ability of the individual to make decisions in an emergency and to choose his own way.

This is a priceless heritage which we may well see a way to encourage more fully by greater equality of opportunity in the future. It is interesting to observe that 77 per cent of high-school students in the nation, as covered by the Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People,[2] felt that tax money should be spent to help able students go to college if they could not otherwise afford to go.

If subsidized education should appear to be a desirable device in our democratic society, certain safeguards should be established in the future. Under the GI Bill numerous fly-by-night schools were established, some of them trade schools, some of them academic in character, but all for the profit of those who founded the schools. Many GI's were exploited by these schools, paying for training in trades which offered no work outlet or being trained in institutions which offered a diploma, but which offered no real backing in obtaining jobs. Many of these schools closed their doors as soon as the load of GI students passed, and the degree, diploma, or certificate of graduation became practically worthless.[3]

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Are we near the ideal of giving every adolescent an opportunity for a high-school education? Give facts to support your answer.
2. Compare states for educational attainments of their populations.
3. Compare the rural farm, rural nonfarm, and urban populations with regard to education. Native whites, foreign-born whites, and Negroes.
4. What proportion of young people sixteen years of age were in school in the United States in 1950? Of rural farm young people? Rural nonfarm? Urban?
5. Make a similar comparison for youth at the college age say, ages eighteen to twenty.
6. Present evidence showing that the ratio of children to adults is deterministic of educational opportunity in the various states and regions.
7. How does ability of the states to support education affect the schooling of adolescents and youths?

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[2] H. H. Remmers, N. L. Gage, and Ben Shimberg, "Youth Looks at Schools and Jobs," No. 18, April, 1948.

[3] For an excellent study of these kinds of educational practices, see Walter H. Slocum, *Report on Education and Training under the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, as Amended,* 81st Congress, 2d Session, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1950.

8. What factors determine the ability of states to provide adequate educational opportunity?

9. What do we mean by parity of educational opportunity and how might it be realized?

10. Trace the trend of school and college enrollments.

11. What factors explain the trends observed?

12. Compare the growth of college enrollments with that of the total population in the United States.

13. What handicaps to schooling do teen-agers face?

14. Present the case for subsidized education for adolescents and youth.

15. What about the nation's need for college-trained people?

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CHAPTER 25

The School as a Vertical Ladder for Adolescents and Youth

America has been a land of immigrant people who arrived to find the tradition of universal free public education both accepted and practiced. One of the major planks in the Americanization program was to see that every child attended school and learned the American language. The faith of the American people in the public school as a device for lifting all to the higher level, not only of citizenship but also of economic and social competence, was soon grasped by the newcomers as they sensed the pulse of American life through the public school.

Faith in the potency of education to elevate the masses has not only been kept alive through the years but has actually led to increasing educational attainments on the part of each generation of students, as they pass through

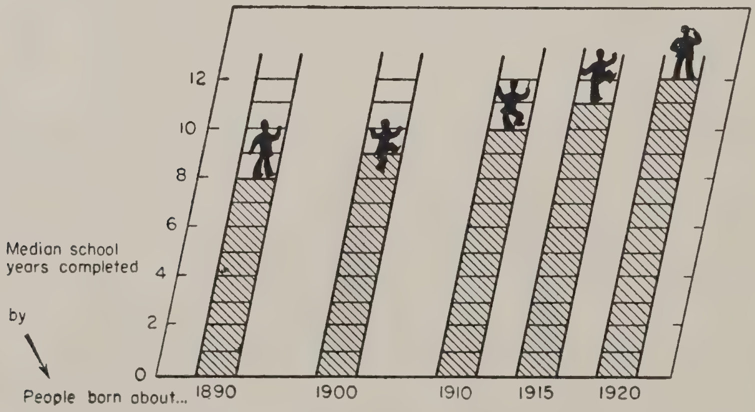

Fig. 77. Each New Generation Climbs Higher on the Educational Ladder.

Those born in 1920 have four years more schooling than those born in 1890. Will a college education soon be as universal as a high-school education is today? (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

our public schools, and in many cases on into higher institutions of learning. The pictographic chart (Fig. 77) by the Midcentury White House Conference shows how far those born on each tenth year from 1890 to 1920 have climbed the educational ladder. The increase has been four years during the thirty-year period and the end is not yet.

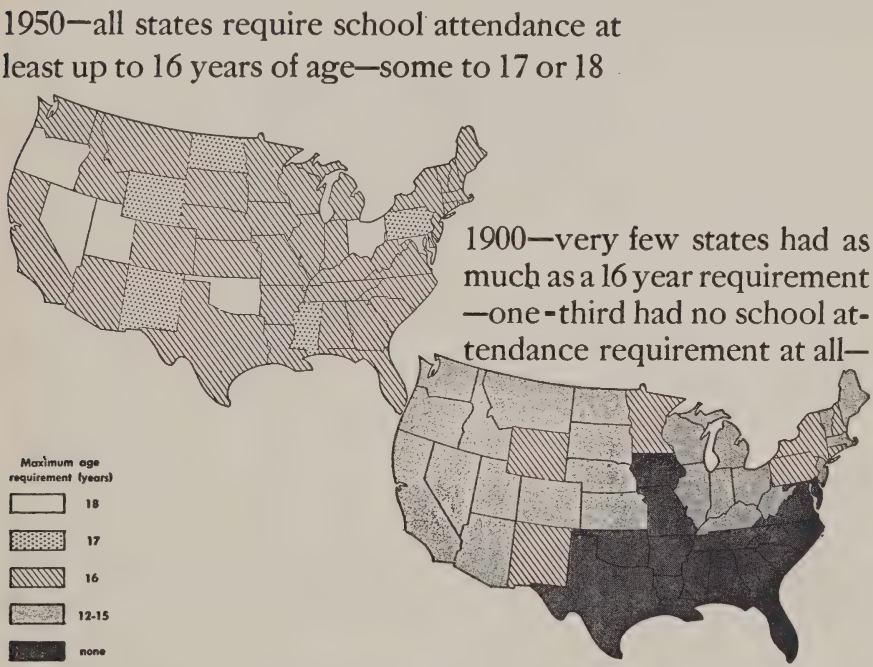
1950—all states require school attendance at least up to 16 years of age—some to 17 or 18
1900—very few states had as much as a 16 year requirement —one-third had no school attendance requirement at all—
Maximum age requirement (years)
18
17
16
12-15
none

Fig. 78. The High School Is Now the Socially Recognized Institution for the Adolescent Years.

Enforcement of school attendance up to these years is, however, still lax in most communities. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

We have reached the point in legislation where all states require school attendance up to sixteen years of age and where some states require school attendance to seventeen or even eighteen years of age. In 1900 very few states required school attendance even to sixteen years of age (see Fig. 78).

School attendance has now become the standard occupation for practically all adolescents and for a majority of those in early youth. It will be seen from Fig. 79 below that well over half of those sixteen to seventeen years of age were in school in 1950 and more than a fourth of those eighteen to nineteen years of age.

Ask any group of college students why they are in school and most of them will answer that they expect to improve their vocational prospects and have a better life than their parents or that they wish, because of superior education, to achieve other social or occupational ambitions. School, therefore, is widely recognized as a social elevator, not only by parents, but by pupils themselves and, of course, by our democratic state, which has for so long attested to its faith in education, not only in theory, but with actual support of the public school system to the extent that it is made increasingly free from individual expense for pupils attending.

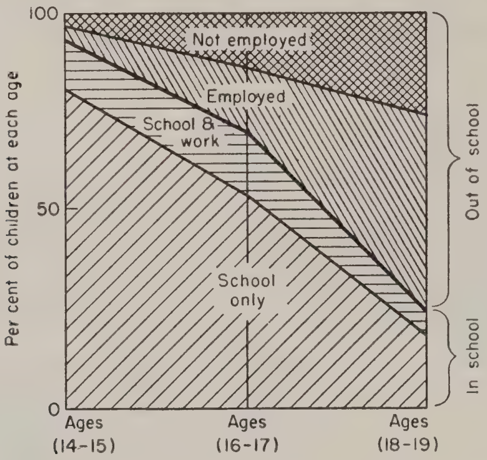

FIG. 79. DISTRIBUTION OF TEEN-AGERS BY ACTIVITIES, 1950.

More were in school than were engaged in any other activity up to the eighteen-to-nineteen-year age level, at which level almost three-fourths were out of school. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

DEMOCRATIC TRADITION AND SCHOOL STATUS ADJUSTMENTS

All societies are stratified into fairly well-defined social layers. These layers vary in rank, status, and prestige. In a democratic society there is a constant movement among layers, and even though some differences in degree of status are recognized among the different classes, these differences are not taken seriously. As long as one can climb from his class to a higher class and one in the higher class can readily fall to a class below, stratification has comparatively little social significance. It is only when these class lines become rigid so that they cannot be crossed that we have the beginnings of a caste society. America has never been completely class-free; it is perhaps more thoroughly democratic in this sense now than in any other time of history. In the early days property holding was a prerequisite to voting. The public school was considered a paupers' school. The most desirable church pews were sold to the highest bidder, and the people who occupied them were held in unique esteem.

Two major forces have probably been responsible in large part for lessening stratification in American life and for the increase of democratic relationships in day-to-day associations. The one has been the labor movement, which has tended to dignify labor, to give the laborer a more influential place in managing affairs, and to give him a more adequate income; the other, and probably most important force of all, has been the modern high school, which tends to fuse all social classes in the community at an impressionable period in life.

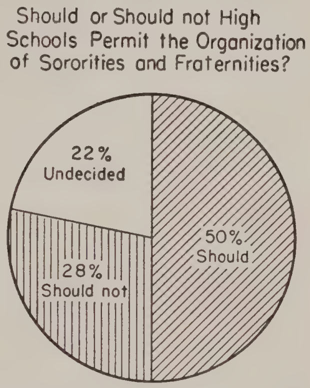

Fig. 80. Half Say High Schools Should Permit Sororities and Fraternities.

This is a vital problem in a democratic society. Answers are as given by a nationwide sample of high-school youth. (*Purdue Opinion Poll for Young People, No.* 19.)

It is difficult for caste feeling to survive in a community where youths of the poorest families meet day to day in the classroom and where children of the underprivileged may often equal or excel children of the privileged. Young people tend to rate other young people on the basis of their abilities to perform in the high-school situation, scholastic or extracurricular activities, rather than on the basis of their home environments or the status and reputations of their parents.

The high-school situation, also, is a great factor in fusing the social classes through marriage. High-school romances very frequently ignore such class lines as may exist in the community. Less and less do young people make their marriage choices on the basis of the rating of their families in the community. The idea that a person is not fit to marry because the parents lack wealth is probably less prominent than at any other time in American history. The high school gives youth the chance to consider each other on the basis of personal merits without regard to ancestral success or failure. The high school often proves beyond doubt that what young people need is a chance. Many who have been denied opportunity in the family make a great deal of the opportunity that school offers and achieve outstanding success. It is not at all unusual for adolescents from families that have extremely low social status to be given an extremely important, influential place in the peer group simply because of their great superiority, talents, abilities, or character. The very lack of these traits in the parental family may tend to enhance the prestige of the youth whom everyone recognizes as having risen above obstacles that would have defeated fearful souls.

The democratic school system does in this manner act as a very important social elevator in helping to lift many youth to social positions in their own communities far superior to those which they could have had if they had remained primarily identified with their parental families. The new social self developed in the school leads them to claim achievement and success for themselves as they go beyond the school situation to attack life confidently.

This is not to deny the fact that young people in high school and college often develop cliquish in-groups that feel superior to all others and practice snobbishness and exclusiveness in informal school relationships. These developments are, however, beyond the scope of the educational institution itself and rarely are given encouragement by it. Often these cliques are the self-anointed glamour girls who in some cases are encouraged in this role by parents, if not, in fact, by example, and are therefore hard to discourage by teachers.

The author has gained the impression from student autobiographies that these snobbish cliques are found most often among adolescent girls in small towns where parents in the business or professional classes may constitute a prestige group in the community. Fortunately, these adolescent cliques are usually broken up as maturity takes the members in different directions.

No social institution is entirely free from the group-wide prejudices that pervade any social order. The school must rise as far as possible above these prejudices, especially as they affect unfavorably the relationship of social groups to each other and of persons to persons. Race prejudice, for example, is deep-seated. In sections of the country these prejudices are deeply ingrained in the mores to the point where it is virtually impossible for the school to rise above them. It is also difficult for school systems that cater primarily to one social stratum or the other to be fully impartial at all times in such matters as the labor movement. Nonetheless, the ideal of an impartial treatment of these subjects, presenting both points of view without passion or prejudice, must be striven for.

SOCIAL CLASS IN SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Warner and his associates, in their study *Democracy in Jonesville*,[1] found that social class made a great deal of difference in school attendance at the high-school age. Studying the 735 adolescents in the town-country community, they found that school attendance was definitely associated with favorable social position, as will be seen from Table 39. Of the lower lower class, 88.7 per cent of adolescents of high-school age were not in school.

TABLE 39. *Relation between Social Class and School Attendance among 735 Adolescents* *

Social class	In school		Out of school	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Upper and upper middle . . .	35	100.0		
Lower middle	146	92.4	12	7.6
Upper lower	183	58.7	129	41.3
Lower lower	26	11.3	204	88.7
Total	390	53.1	345	46.9

* W. Lloyd Warner, *et al.*, *Democracy in Jonesville*, p. 206, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1939.

They also found that grades were definitely associated with social class. For example, of the upper and upper-middle groups over half received grades of 85 or above; none received grades below 70. At the opposite extreme, in the lower lower class only 8.3 per cent received grades of 85 or above and 25 per cent received grades below 70.

The authors are inclined to interpret this as clear evidence that social prestige of children affects their grading by teachers. One might well question this assumption, although teachers no doubt are too much influenced by social class of students in small communities. It is probable, however, that even in small communities the upper classes are by and large made up of those of more ability.

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[1] W. Lloyd Warner, *et al.*, Chap. 12, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1939.

For example, some years ago Terman in his *Genetic Studies of Genius* showed that the upper social and economic classes produced geniuses far beyond their normal proportions in the populations, whereas the laboring classes produced far fewer children of genius capacity than their normal ratio in the population. To be specific, his findings were as follows:

Grouped into occupational classes were 560 fathers of child geniuses. In the area studied, 2.9 per cent of the population were in the professional group; yet 29.1 per cent of the gifted children's fathers were in this group. At the other extreme was the industrial group, which composed 57.7 per cent of the total population but contributed only 20.2 per cent of the gifted children. Ranking the four groups into which the fathers were classified, Terman found that the professional group produced 1,003 per cent of its normal quota of gifted children; the public-service group (public officials, postmen, military men), 137 per cent; the commercial group, 128 per cent; but the industrial group, only 35 per cent. It seems likely that the opportunity factor has to some extent affected these genius scores, yet the results cannot be set aside on the basis of differences in opportunity alone.

Warner also finds that social class is definitely related to participation in school activities. The upper groups all participated, whereas almost three-fourths of the lower classes were nonparticipants in school activities. On the average each of the upper classes also participated in more activities than did the lower classes.

Differences in school attendance and school performance between youth of various social classes similar to those reported by Warner were found by Hollingshead in *Elmtown's Youth*.[2] Also in this study, intelligence-test scores by social class actually indicated that the upper social classes do much better on intelligence tests than do the lower classes, indicating that there actually is a selection by social class in part on the basis of ability. Hollingshead does not believe that the differences in I.Q., however, were great enough to justify the high proportion of failures that existed among the lower social classes, although it is obvious in this, as in the Warner studies, that the authors are doing their utmost to make a strong case for class discrimination in the interpretation of their data.

Even discounting this bias, findings of these studies [3] indicate rather clearly that (1) there is a difference either in teachers' and school administrators' attitudes toward the lower classes, which make it impossible for them to get an even break in the school system, or (2) that the school program is better adapted to the needs of the upper and upper-middle classes than to the needs of the lower classes, or (3) that the lower classes in small towns and country areas are definitely an inferior group from the standpoint of ability, energy, and breadth of interests, or (4) that some other factors or a combination of the above factors, and perhaps others not measured specifically by these studies, hinder the lower classes from achieving a satisfactory place in the all-around school program at the secondary level.

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[2] August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth,* Part III, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1949.

[3] See also Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South,* chapters on "The White Upper-class Family," "The White Middle-class Family," and "The White Lower-class Family," University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1941.

To the extent that discrimination due to social class is a factor, the school system must reappraise its program, rerate its personnel, and test itself critically by the standards of a democratic society.

SOCIAL CLASS AND EDUCATIONAL MOTIVATION

One of the most penetrating psychological analyses of the effect of social class on the motivation of adolescence and youth in high school and community relations is that of Allison Davis,[4] Education Professor at the University of Chicago. Being a Negro as well as a student of social relations, he knows from experience as well as from years of study through case documents and other data the motivations of the poor. He holds that our society has distinct cultural systems. Among these are those of (1) social class, (2) of ethnic or foreign-born groups, and (3) the color castes.

The particular social class into which one is born, he believes, determines his motivations and his goals. The supreme weight given to middle-class values in the American cultural system, and particularly in the American school system, leads the foreign-born quickly to shed their past and to adopt the values and attitudes of the American middle class. The color castes are fixed. There is no climbing between classes since birth determines one's place, if he is marked by color, and prohibits status movement.

Social class, he believes, determines school relationships as well as informal participation in social cliques in the informal relationships of the school and community. The middle-class group is trained to the point where it is motivated by anxieties to conform to the values and moral standards of the middle class. These anxieties determine the individual's approach to problems and his control of particular organic drives. Anxiety to conform becomes a motivating force which leads youth of the middle classes to strive for the group rewards of status, and they feel uneasy lest the reward for which they strive will not be attained. Among the lower classes, the culture of both whites and Negroes, he feels, organizes adolescent behavior with regard to drives and goals far differently, because the goals that will be rewarding to the middle-class adolescent prove not to be rewarding at all to the lower-class adolescent. He says:[5]

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[4] "Socialization and Adolescent Personality," Chap. 11 in Forty-third Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, *Adolescence,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1944.

> With regard to a great many goals, what is rewarding to a middle-class adolescent is not at all so to a lower-class adolescent. What they fear, what they abhor, what they desire, what they crave, what they will work for, or fight for, what they consider valuable or sacred differ in almost every basic area of human relationships.

In comparing the two classes, Davis says further:[6]

> The middle-class adolescent is punished for physical aggression and for physical sexual relations; the lower-class adolescent is frequently rewarded, both socially and organically, for these same behaviors. The degree of anxiety, guilt, or frustration attached to these behaviors, therefore, is entirely different in the two cases. One might go so far as to say that in the case of middle-class adolescents such anxiety and guilt, with regard to physical aggression and sexual intercourse, are proof of their normal socialization in their culture.

The middle class emphasizes respectability, morality, property, money, and other such symbols of attainment which prove that one belongs to the middle-class group. This group emphasizes self-improvement through education and book clubs, art, music, community improvement, church and civic organizations. These values are held in low esteem by the lower-class culture, and their tendency is to avoid socialization in these directions. They therefore lack the motivation to attain the higher levels of schooling as symbols of middle-class propriety.

As Davis expresses it:[7]

> To make low-status children *anxious* to work hard, study hard, save their money and accept stricter sex mores, our society must convince them of the *reality* of the *rewards* at the end of the anxiety-laden climb. To the upper-

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 209.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 211.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 214.

> middle-class child, who learns well and climbs fast, the prestige rewards appear large, certain, and relatively near. Our society cannot hope, therefore, to educate the great masses of lower-class people in any really effective manner until it has *real* rewards to offer them for learning the necessary anxiety.

Members of the middle class find their desire to climb the social and economic ladder rewarding. Members of the lower class, because of various handicaps in the way of their social climbing, find no reward in this kind of values and are likely to seek an outlet of satisfaction in pure physical outlets that bring immediate pleasure. The problem of education, Davis believes, is to make middle-class values appear rewarding to those of low class status and to create a social situation in which these values will be rewarding for the lower classes.

PROGRAMS FOR THE VERTICAL MOBILITY OF FARM YOUTH

Even though our nation has an agricultural past, it, like so many people, seems not to be proud of its past, for the agricultural occupation no longer commands first rank in status in our urban industrial society. In fact, the tendency is to rate white-collar and other nonmanual occupations far above agriculture.

Yet agriculture is still one of our important occupations, and in many respects the farm population helps conserve American traditions and acts as a balance wheel in American political, economic, and moral life. It is important that our educational system, which tends toward a theoretical and industrial orientation, give farm youth who are interested in agriculture an opportunity to feel that they have a place for climbing along lines of their own occupation and interest.

Nothing has done so much in the United States to provide a vertical ladder for farm youth as two nationwide agricultural programs for them—the 4-H club movement, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperatively with the various state Agricultural Extension Services, and the Future Farmers of America, which is sponsored by the Smith-Hughes Act of the Federal government and carried on in cooperation with the high schools of the various states.

Both programs provide work training which permits the young person to acquire status along the lines of agriculture and homemaking. Both work by the project method. The young person chooses a project such as the raising of livestock or crops; or, in the case of the girls, carrying on a particular activity like canning, sewing, or some other household activity. Through supervised work activities, farm young people are taught to excel in various lines of scientific endeavor in agriculture and homemaking.

Both 4-H clubs and Future Farmers organizations provide normal competition at fairs and at special livestock and other shows. This competition extends to the state, to the region, and eventually climaxes each year in certain teen-agers' being chosen to go to the capital of the nation for their final honors.

These programs provide for increased parent-child cooperation in the rural community by helping both parent and child see how they can share work and experience and can profit to a mutual advantage. This work has done much to give agriculture status in the eyes of peers in the school system. Not only does it make farm youth proud of their work but it makes town and city youth envious of certain of the opportunities that farm youth have.

In some respects these educational programs, like many other phases of education, may not have been as democratic as they could have been made. One of the frequent criticisms made of the Agricultural Extension Service during the depression decade of the 1930's was that it tended to cater to the upper classes in the farm community. Partly as a consequence of the feeling that there was neglect by the Agricultural Extension Service of the lower third in agriculture, the Farm Security Administration, later called the Farmers' Home Administration, was created as a relief agency for farm people. At the same time it carried on an agricultural education program through home economists and farm-management experts. This program was very effective in helping adults in the lower economic brackets of agriculture, but developed no extensive youth program.

Whether or not this criticism of the Agricultural Extension Service is justified, of course, is debatable. The U.S. Extension Service was initiated at the time the boll weevil was destroying the cotton crop in the South. Knapp, the initiator of the program, went into the South and asked leading farmers whether or not they would be willing to set aside certain acreages where the government could demonstrate to neighbors how to control the boll weevil. It is quite natural that in its initiation the Extension Service would have found more cooperation and more ability to demonstrate good farming among the more prosperous farmers than among the poorer, less intelligent farmers. So it probably has been through the years.

As long as the Extension Service depends upon the demonstration method, it is probable that the more successful farmers and their children will participate more than less successful farmers and their children. It is such attitudes as these that make for success in farming. On the other hand, every effort should be made on the part of the Extension Service and other agricultural programs to reach all social classes.

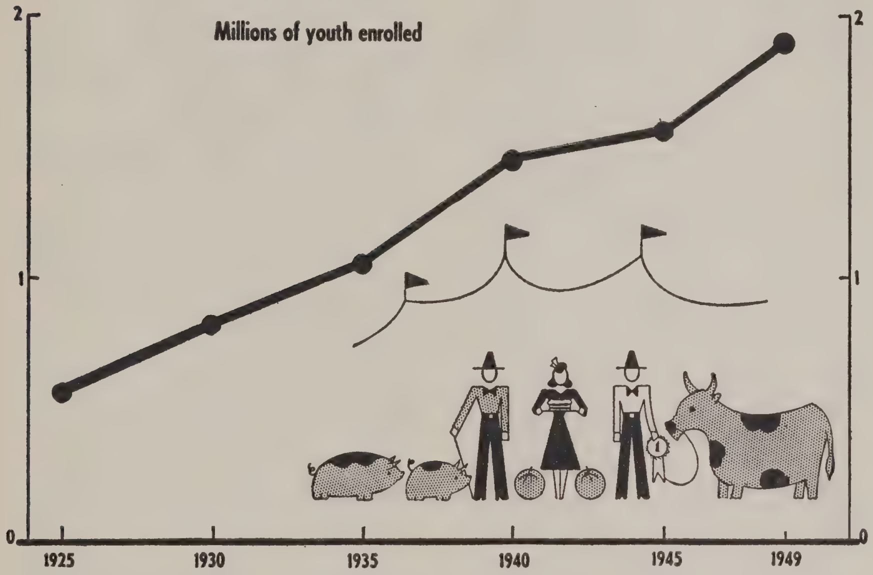

Fig. 81. Youths Enrolled in 4-H Clubs.

These clubs for farm youth number 84,000 and are carried on by 180,000 local leaders in the various counties of the nation. (*Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth.*)

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Relate the school program of the United States to its democratic faith.
2. Is there evidence that we still believe in education as a social elevator?
3. What proportion of teen-agers are now in school?
4. Explain the high rates of school attendance at the high-school age.
5. How does the school as a social elevator help keep social castes from forming?
6. Appraise the evidence that social class affects school performance. School adjustment.
7. Present Allison Davis's views on the effect of social class on educational motivations of the individual. The values to be achieved in life.
8. What special routes for vertical mobility are open to farm youth? Discuss their importance.

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List of Visual Aids

The visual aids listed below and on the following pages can be used to supplement the material in this book. It is recommended, however, that each film be reviewed before using in order to determine its suitability for a particular group.

Both motion pictures and filmstrips are included in this list of visual materials, as indicated by the self-explanatory abbreviations "MP" and "FS." Immediately following this identification is the name of the producer; if the distributor is different from the producer, the name of the distributor follows. Abbreviations are identified in the list of addresses at the end of the bibliography. In most instances, the films listed can be borrowed or rented from local or state 16-mm. film libraries. Unless otherwise indicated, the motion pictures are 16-mm. sound films and the filmstrips are 35-mm., silent.

This bibliography is suggestive only, and film users should examine the latest annual edition and quarterly supplements of *Educational Film Guide,* a catalog of some 10,000 films published by the H. W. Wilson Co., New York. The *Guide,* a standard reference book, is available in most college and public libraries.

Part One: Biology, Social Structure, Personality

Emotional Health (MP, McGraw, 20 min). Uses a dramatized situation to show that emotional upsets are not uncommon among young people of college age; that such upsets, if prolonged, require professional counsel and care; and that psychiatric treatment is common-sense therapy for such emotional upsets. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, 25 frames, also available.)

Experimental Studies in Social Climates of Groups (MP, Iowa U, 30 min). Portrays the behavior of groups of boys organized in clubs run on democratic principles, as an autocracy, and as a laissez-faire group; shows differences in behavior when the groups are interchanged; and gives statistics via charts and graphs concerning group actions and reactions.

Feeling of Hostility (MP, CNFB/McGraw, 27 min). Case study of Clare, an outwardly successful but inwardly incomplete personality; and through dramatized flash backs into her early life at home and at school, an understanding of the reasons for her hostility towards herself and others.

Feeling of Rejection (MP, CNFB/McGraw, 23 min). A case history of a neurotic young woman suffering from headaches and physical fatigue; and an explanation, through scenes of her early life, of the psychosomatic reasons for her physical ills.

Feelings of Depression (MP, CNFB/McGraw; 30 min). Case history of man in his early thirties who suffers periods of great despondency; and an explanation, through scenes of his early life, of the psychological reasons for his condition.

High Walls (MP, Anti-Def/McGraw, 32 min). Portrays a conflict between two groups of teen-age boys and traces the reasons for the conflict to parental attitudes.

Human Growth (MP, Brown, 19 min, color). Portrays a seventh-grade class viewing and discussing a film which traces, through animated drawings, the development of a human organism from pregnancy to birth, then from infancy through childhood and adolescence to adulthood. Illustrates the differences between males and females in the stages of growth.

Human Reproduction (MP, McGraw, 20 min). Portrays by means of animated drawings the process of human reproduction, including the menstrual cycle, male and female reproductive organs, fertilization of the ovum, development of the embryo, and the process of birth. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, 30 frames, also available.)

Over-dependency (MP, CNFB/McGraw, 32 min). Case study of a young man who has been crippled mentally and emotionally by over-dependency upon his mother, sister, and wife.

Shy Guy (MP, Coronet, 13 min). Shows how a shy adolescent improves his social relationships by following principles of friendly association demonstrated by his fellow students.

The Story of Menstruation (MP, ICP, 10 min, color). Shows by animated drawings and diagrams the reasons for and the process of menstruation. Primarily for adolescent girls.

Part Two: Attaining Moral Maturity

Angry Boy (MP, MHFB/IFB, 33 min). Traces the basic causes of the emotional disturbances of a boy who is caught stealing in school, and portrays the usefulness of psychiatric treatment in modifying the behavior of the boy.

Boy in Court (MP, NPPA, 12 min). Portrays a group of boys stealing a car, being arrested and brought before a juvenile court; and the workings and decisions of the court in handling the case of one of the boys.

A Criminal Is Born (MP, MGM/TFC, 20 min). Portrays through dramatized sequences the actions of a gang of juvenile delinquents, the reasons for their delinquent behavior, and the consequences of such behavior. (Crime Does Not Pay series.)

Dead End (MP, TFC, 13 min). Excerpt from the feature film, same title, portraying a sequence in which a gang of slum boys in New York City attack a rich boy and take his watch; one of the gang surrenders to police and is sent to reform school.

The Devil Is a Sissy (MP, TFC, 16 min). Excerpt from the feature film, same title, portraying a juvenile court situation in which three boys, arrested for stealing toys, explain the reasons for their theft, and the judge handles the situation in a constructive manner.

Make Way for Youth (MP, Nat Soc Wel/Assn, 22 min). A dramatized account of the formation of a Youth Council in a midwestern town, the need for such a council, and the activities of the council, including the conversion of an old warehouse into a community youth center.

Part Three: The Transition to Marital Adulthood

Are You Ready for Marriage? (MP, Coronet, 15 min). Portrays a couple who want to get married and their discovery of what it takes to be ready for marriage. Contains a check list of criteria for engagement and marriage.

Choosing for Happiness (MP, McGraw, 14 min). Portrays through dramatized situations the reactions of a girl to various boy friends and her rejection of all of them—and they of her; and suggests that the girl should re-evaluate herself and her demands on others. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, 38 frames, also available—Marriage series.)

Courtship to Courthouse (MP, RKO/McGraw, 15 min). Presents the divorce problem in the United States (1948), explains factors contributing to divorces, and relates the divorce problem to an understanding of courtship and the responsibilities of marriage. (This is America series.)

Families First (MP, NY Com, 17 min). Contrasts the relationships and conditions prevailing in two different families; shows the tensions and anti-social attitudes in one family and the affection and harmonious relationships in the other.

A Family Affair (FS, Pilgrim, 69 fr. plus record, 78 rpm, 15 min). Portrays through humorous situations some of the problems families face when their adolescent children fall in love.

Going Steady (MP, Coronet, 10 min). Discusses "going steady" as a normal step in the progress toward engagement and marriage; and raises, for subsequent discussion, questions concerning this practice.

Happily Euer After (FS, Film Pub, 57 fr). Discussion of the problems of marriage and of the need for adolescents to consider and understand these problems.

Home Ground (FS, McGraw, 36 fr). Presents a pattern for living as a member of a family—cooperation at home, respect for the privacy of others in the family, use of the telephone, and maintaining family harmony.

How Do You Know It's Love (MP, Coronet, 12 min). Explains the factors to be considered in determining whether "being in love" is sufficient reason for a happy marriage.

Is Your Home Fun? (FS, Pilgrim, 18 min). Comparison of two homes, one run on an authoritarian basis; the other, on a friendly, harmonious basis.

It Takes All Kinds (MP, McGraw, 20 min). Portrays through dramatized sequences a series of young couples reacting to tense situations; relates their reactions to their possibilities for marriage success or failure; and emphasizes the point that marriage partners should be carefully chosen. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, 37 frames, also available—Marriage series.)

Marriage and Divorce (MP, MOT/McGraw, 15 min). Surveys the problems of broken homes and divorces; and relates these problems to general family relations.

Marriage Is a Partnership (MP, Coronet, 15 min). Explains some of the common problems faced by newly married couples, and emphasizes the importance of considering marriage as a partnership.

Marriage Today (MP, McGraw, 22 min). As a follow-up film to *This Charming Couple,* answers are given to some of the problems raised in the other film. Portrays two couples who have made their marriages work and how the individuals have made a success of their marriages. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, 39 frames, also available—Marriage series.)

This Charming Couple (MP, McGraw, 19 min). Portrays through dramatized situations a young married couple and the reasons for their failure to achieve marital happiness. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, 39 frames, also available—Marriage series.)

Who's Boss (MP, McGraw, 16 min). Portrays a young married couple, both of whom are individualists, their differences, and their decision to adjust their differences through cooperation. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, 36 frames, also available—Marriage series.)

Part Four: The Struggle for Economic Adulthood

Aptitudes and Occupations (MP, Coronet, 16 min). Discusses six human abilities—mechanical, clerical, social, musical, artistic, and scholastic—and indicates how a student may, with the aid of a school counselor, determine which of these abilities he has.

Careers for Girls (MP, MOT/McGraw, 18 min). Portrays the wide variety of jobs open to women; points out the relationships between a girl's everyday interests and different types of jobs; and emphasizes the importance of early career planning.

Counseling: Its Tools and Techniques (MP, VGF, 22 min). Portrays a well-trained counselor at work; his tools and techniques; and the use of interviewing, tests, questionnaires, films, etc.

Finding Your Life Work (MP, VGF, 22 min). Emphasizes the importance of "knowing oneself" and of evaluating interests, abilities, accomplishments, etc., in terms of different occupations and professions.

Part Five: Adolescents and Youth in School

Broader Concept of Method. Part 1: Developing Pupil Interest (MP, McGraw, 13 min). Contrasts a conventional, teacher-dominated lesson and an informal class with teachers and students planning and working together. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, 33 frames, also available.)

Broader Concept of Method. Part 2: Teachers and Pupils Planning and Working Together (MP, McGraw, 19 min). Students learning to work together in class projects with the help and guidance of the teacher. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, 37 frames, also available.)

Individual Differences (MP, McGraw, 23 min). Portrays a case study of a shy, slow child and the problems of his relationships with his more socially adept classmates and brother. Emphasizes the importance of individual differences and the responsibility of education for meeting individual needs. (Educational Psychology series.)

Learning to Understand Children. Part 1: A Diagnostic Approach (MP, McGraw, 20 min). Case study of a 15-year-old girl, badly maladjusted in school, and of the teacher's attempts to learn the causes of the girl's maladjustment. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, 37 frames, also available.)

Learning to Understand Children. Part 2: A Remedial Program (MP, McGraw, 22 min). Continuation of Part 1 showing the teacher's program, curricular and instructional, to help the girl become adjusted to herself and to the school environment. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, 34 frames, also available.)

Problem of Pupil Adjustment: The Drop-out (MP, McGraw, 20 min). Characteristics of a high-school program which cause students to leave school as soon as possible. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, also available.)

Problem of Pupil Adjustment: The Stay-in (MP, McGraw, 19 min). How "drop-outs" can be reduced when individual needs are met in a school program that stresses learning in terms of adjustment to everyday living. (Correlated filmstrip, same title, also available.)

Learning a New Way (MP, Moffilm, 11 min). A high-school senior's film of his social-studies class project at College High School, State Teachers College, Montclair, N.J. Features the principle of cooperative planning in the learning process.

The Teacher as Observer and Guide (MP, TC, 20 min). Classroom situations emphasizing the importance of the teacher as an observer and a guide of pupil growth and development.

Directory of Sources

Anti-Def—Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. (Films distributed by McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.)
Assn—Association Films, Inc., 35 W. 45th St., New York 19.
Brown—E. C. Brown Trust, 220 S.W. Alder St., Portland 4, Ore.
CNFB—National Film Board of Canada. (Films distributed by McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.)
Coronet—Coronet Films, Inc., Coronet Bldg., Chicago 1.
Film Pub—Film Publishers, Inc., 25 Broad St., New York 4.
ICP—International Cellucotton Products Company, 919 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11.
IFB—International Film Bureau, 6 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 2.
Iowa U—State University of Iowa, Bureau of Visual Instruction, Iowa City.
McGraw—McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., Text-Film Department, 330 W. 42d St., New York 36.
MGM—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. (Films distributed by Teaching Film Custodians.)
MHFB—Mental Health Film Board. (Films distributed by International Film Bureau.)
Moffilm—Moffilm, State Teachers College, Upper Montclair, N.J.
MOT—March of Time Forum Films. (Films distributed by McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.)
Nat Soc Wel—National Social Welfare Assembly. (Films distributed by Association Films.)
NPPA—National Probation and Parole Association, 1790 Broadway, New York 19.
NY Com—New York State Department of Commerce, Film Library, 40 Howard St., Albany 1.
Pilgrim—Pilgrim Press, 14 Beacon St., Boston 8.
RKO—RKO Pathé. (Films distributed by McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.)
TC—Teachers College, Columbia University, New York.
TFC—Teaching Film Custodians, Inc., 25 W. 43d St., New York 18.
VGF—Vocational Guidance Films, 215 E. 3d St., Des Moines.

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